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ABSTRACT

A 1985 mail survey of 97 rural schools and 53 coastal (urban/suburban) schools in Queensland, Australia, investigated teacher characteristics, problems, and needs. Respondents included 504 rural teachers, 215 rural parents, 405 coastal teachers, and 179 coastal parents. The results confirm many previous findings about teaching in rural Australia. Compared to coastal teachers, rural teachers were younger, less experienced, more mobile, and less satisfied with their teaching appointments. Greater proportions of rural teachers taught in multigrade classrooms and perceived their students to be poorly motivated and low achievers. The difficulties of teaching and living in rural areas included inadequate knowledge of the local situation, inadequate resources, professional isolation, social and cultural isolation, being more in the public eye, and being expected to participate in community activities. Almost all respondents saw a need for special in-service and induction programs for rural teachers; about 25% of rural teachers felt that such programs currently available were not in touch with reality. This report contains 41 references and 80 data tables. Appendices include the questionnaires used, lists of participating schools, and 40 additional tables that break down rural teachers' responses by gender, marital status, primary versus secondary level, government versus private school, years in present school, and school size. (SV)

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TEACHING IN RURAL AND ISOLATED AREAS OF QUEENSLAND

BOARD OF TEACHER EDUCATION

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CHAPTER 1

AIMS OF THE STUDY AND REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Throughout our history, isolation has been a constant problem. Despite population growth and the development of sophisticated networks of transportation and communications, many of the basic disabilities of living and working in rural and isolated areas remain. Today, because of these developments, we are probably much more aware of the discrepancies that exist between coastal/urban and rural/isolated living than ever before.

Increased personal affluence, mobility, changes in the economic and workforce structure, and the greatly increased participation of women in paid employment over the past two decades have sharply revealed issues and problems faced by individuals, communities, and industries in the more remote regions of the state and Australia. From the first itinerant teachers to the most recent satellite trials and Distance Education Centres, the Queensland Department of Education has been innovative and flexible in seeking to meet the needs of isolated school children. In many areas of the provision of education for children in isolated areas this state has been at the very forefront of development.

Notwithstanding the best endeavours of the past, the problems and needs of today must be clearly defined, measured, and communicated to those in positions best placed to implement change. As this chapter documents, many recent reports have commented and recommended on issues related to the quality and delivery of education in rural and isolated areas of Australia. One such issue is that of appropriately preparing teachers for service in isolated areas; another is the problem of attracting teachers to, and retaining teachers in, these remote places.

1.1 Aims of the study

This study aims to provide an insight into the problems and needs of teachers throughout Queensland, with special reference to rural and isolated areas. The findings may prove useful to those involved in the pre-service preparation of primary and secondary teachers, administrators in schools, and providers of in-service courses, and may ultimately lead to an enhancement of the quality of education afforded to children in isolated areas.

Involving as it did a wide spectrum of interested and knowledgeable people, this study brings together experience and opinion from all levels of the education system and from numerous communities in which the day-to-day realities of education assume personal dimensions. The report seeks to represent the situation as it is and to bring forward appropriate comments and recommendations which should assist in shaping the provisions and practices of the future.

1.2 Review of the literature

1.2.1 Introduction

The last ten or so years have seen an increased interest in rural education among educators and social scientists in various fields, both in Australia and overseas.

In Australia, problems in rural education have been noted in such national reports as those of the 1976 Commission of Inquiry into Poverty, the 1980 National Inquiry into Teacher Education and the Schools Commission's Report for the Triennium 1982-1984. In addition, a number of studies, inquiries and conferences have occurred within the individual states. As Tomlinson (1985) points out, the Australian literature

is limited, most reports being in-house documents of the various State Departments of Education.

While earlier studies focused on educational disadvantages of rurality, studies undertaken in the 1980s (e.g. those done as part of an OECD-initiated project on rural education) have indicated rural schools should be viewed as different from rather than inferior to metropolitan schools.

This review presents relevant findings of selected Australian research reports and inquiries dating mainly from the mid-1970s to the present. The findings relevant to this study are presented under the following headings:

- The context of rural education
  - school and pupil characteristics
  - teacher characteristics
  - school-community relationships
- Selection of teachers for rural schools
- Pre-service education of teachers for rural schools
- Induction and in-service education of rural teachers
- Other support services and conditions for rural teachers.

The subject of distance teaching is not addressed in this review, nor are findings concerned specifically with particular groups of rural children (e.g. Aboriginals, girls, gifted children and the handicapped).

1.2.2 The context of rural education

School and pupil characteristics

Small size

Rural schools generally have small numbers of teachers and pupils.

Smallness can be seen as a disadvantage in that it often means:

- fewer resources and facilities such as library books, sports and laboratory equipment
- lack of contact with specialist teachers such as subject and career counsellors, special education teachers, subject specialists
- the need to conduct multiple-age classes, which many teachers find difficult to organise and teach
- difficulty in providing for exceptional children, due to their very small numbers
- the same pupils and teachers being involved with each other for a number of years in spite of teacher difficulties or personality clashes
- teachers being expected to take classes in subjects for which they lack academic preparation; secondary teachers being expected to teach in several content areas
- a greater expectation that teachers will take extra-curricular activities
- each teacher being required to undertake a greater burden of non-instructional duties (e.g. curriculum development, administrative tasks).

(See Commission of Inquiry into Poverty, 1976; Education Commission of New South Wales, 1984; French, 1981; Harris, Rooth and Smolicz, n.d.; Lake, 1983; Meyenn, 1983; Turney, Sinclair and Cairns, 1980.)

On the other hand, smallness can be seen as an advantage because it encourages or permits features such as:

- an informal, familial environment, providing security and fostering confidence
- teachers knowing their pupils comparatively well as individuals, and being better able to understand their family background
- greater opportunity for each student to make an easily recognisable contribution to the ongoing life of the school, providing a sense of belonging and of value to the school
- greater potential for the curriculum to be made relevant and related to the pupil's environment and experience
- smaller classes, permitting more individual attention to be given to pupils
- integrated learning, a flexible timetable, individualised and small-group instruction, peer or cross-age tutoring, cross-age grouping, and "mainstreaming" of mildly handicapped children
- teachers having a sense of control over curriculum content and teaching methods, with more flexibility to capitalise on their own individual strengths and the opportunities afforded by their particular situation
- a minimal bureaucratic structure, allowing a higher proportion of resources to be devoted to instruction and less to "systems maintenance", and an emphasis on the needs of children rather than on the organisational demands created by a large institution
- use of the community and local environment as learning resources, which can result in more varied and more effective learning experiences than are provided by many large schools
- for schools with both primary and secondary departments, the potential to implement a K-10 or 1-10 school policy in the various curriculum areas and for a smoother transition of pupils between school levels.

(See Brown and Maisey, 1980; Harris et al., n.d.; Lake, 1983; Maroya, 1985; Meyenn, 1983; Meyenn and Boylan, 1985; Middleton, 1984; Miland, 1983; Mossenson, 1979; National Inquiry into Teacher Education, 1980.)

Isolation

In 1981, approximately 16,000 teachers (9 per cent of the total teaching force) in Australia were located in schools that were more than 150 kilometres from a regional centre (Schools Commission, 1981). The remoteness of many rural schools, together with the small size of their staffs, can lead rural teachers to feel professionally isolated (Education Commission of New South Wales, 1984; Lake, 1983). They lack ready access to various resources and information which are more easily available in cities, and those wishing to undertake further formal study must generally do so externally. Those in one-teacher schools lack the professional support provided by daily contact with their peers.

Because of their small size and geographic location, rural communities often have a more restricted range of entertainment facilities, consumer goods, health and education services and so forth than do larger urban areas. This can lead to a degree of cultural isolation which is likely to be more keenly felt by teachers than others in the community.

Pupil characteristics

In the 1970s, the Commission of Inquiry into Poverty found that because of various selection processes operating on country children (e.g. those in wealthier families being sent to private boarding schools in cities), the populations of many country schools were biased towards the lower socio-economic groups. This, together with lack of local employment and tertiary education opportunities, was seen as adversely affecting the educational aspirations of pupils. Low motivation was associated with low levels of educational achievement. McSwan (1987) reported similar findings in a study of progression and retention rates of secondary school children in western Queensland.

A large study in New South Wales (Turney et al., 1980) found that geographically isolated students had lower levels of self-esteem, felt less in control of their school learning and achievement, and had lower levels of reading achievement than urban children of the same age.

The Commonwealth Schools Commission (1985) comments on the need for enhanced self-concept and attitudes to learning among country students.

However, by contrast, a study in Western Australia (Brown and Maisey, 1980) found that students from a small rural primary school achieved well when they went on to high school.

Teacher characteristics

Age and experience

Teachers in rural schools are frequently young and inexperienced. For example, in a recent study, it was found that 37 per cent of teachers in western Queensland were under 25 years old while 14 per cent of teachers in the rest of the state were under 25 (McSwan, 1985).

(See also French, 1981; Harris et al., n.d.; Miland, 1983; Interim Committee for the Australian Schools Commission, 1973; Sher, 1981.)

Youth and inexperience may be regarded as a disadvantage in some respects, both for the teachers themselves (e.g. in having to adjust both to teaching and to rural life) and for the pupils whom they teach (e.g. exacerbating the problems of providing for exceptional children) (Brown and Maisey, 1980). But young teachers also bring vitality and awareness of the most recent developments in education (Miland, 1983).

Mobility

The literature suggests that teachers generally regard rural postings as undesirable and tend not to stay long in rural schools; this has meant that the rate of staff turnover for country schools has been overall much higher than that for urban schools (Commission of Inquiry into Poverty, 1976; Commonwealth Schools Commission, 1985; Interim Committee for the Australian Schools Commission, 1973; National Inquiry into Teacher Education, 1980). A study by the Board of Teacher Education (1986) showed that, in July 1985, the median length of time which teachers in western Queensland had been teaching in their present school was eighteen months, compared with a state-wide median of two-and-a-half years.

A high teacher mobility rate can contribute to the instability or discontinuity

of school programs and activities (Committee of Review: Education 2000 Submissions, 1986; Harris et al., n.d.; Ministerial Advisory Committee, 1986), and can inhibit teachers from identifying with the particular school and community concerned and detract from the community's acceptance of the teacher (Stoessiger, 1982). Yet, a high turnover of teachers can be beneficial in introducing new ideas to conservative rural communities (Education Commission of New South Wales, 1984) and in allowing children in very small schools to experience a variety of teachers during their primary education (Brown and Maisey, 1980).

In the 1980s, authors in some states reported decreased staff turnover in rural schools (Education Commission of New South Wales, 1984; Edwards, 1981; Meyenn and Boylan, 1985). However, the study by the Board of Teacher Education (1986) indicates that, in western Queensland schools, the turnover rate is still higher than in metropolitan schools.

School/community relationships

Active interdependence between the school and its community is one of the key attributes of rural education (Maxwell, 1981). The role of rural schools in local economic, political and social development is the focus of Stoessiger's (1982) overview of various state projects on rural education. The rural school is a primary source of community pride, identity and stability, and often of public entertainment. The resulting degree of parental and community involvement in the school can be advantageous in acting to support the teacher's efforts. Indeed, teachers in Lake's (1983) study in Western Australia saw the school-community relationship as an important advantage of teaching in a country school (see also Brown and Maisey, 1980; Maroya, 1985).

At the same time, the extended social interaction between local families and teachers, and the additional social responsibilities placed on teachers (e.g. arranging social activities to be held in the school building), may lead the rural teacher to feel a lack of personal freedom and privacy (Education Commission of New South Wales, 1984; Lake, 1983). Rural teachers generally come from outside the district and have little knowledge or understanding of the lifestyle and existing relationships and networks in the community concerned. Thus, the education programs they provide may be inappropriate to the rural context and relations between rural teachers and parents may be poor (Commission of Inquiry into Poverty, 1976; Education Commission of New South Wales, 1984; Turney et al., 1980).

This helps to explain the often ambivalent attitude of rural communities towards schools: while they value education greatly, they may see the local school itself as a foreign influence (McLean, 1981).

1.2.3 Selection of teachers for rural schools

Several suggestions and recommendations concerning the selection of teachers for rural schools are made in the literature. Those following deal with ways of helping to overcome the perceived problems indicated in the previous section:

- teacher education institutions, in selecting teaching candidates, should ensure that rural dwellers are well-represented. In this way, schools could be allocated staff who have personal knowledge of rural life (Education Department of Western Australia, 1980; Sher, 1981)
- teacher employing authorities should actively identify and recruit individuals aspiring to be rural teachers (Maxwell, 1981)
- some suitability criteria should be used in the selection of teachers for appointment to rural schools. This would ensure that staff are more sensitive to rural

values and circumstances, and possibly reduce the mobility of teachers (Education Commission of New South Wales, 1984; Education Department of Western Australia, 1980). For example, preference could be given to those whose professional preparation was particularly oriented to rural schools, who have talents and interests relevant to such an appointment, who because of having lived in country areas have an understanding of rural life, who exhibit a capacity for professional self-reliance, or who have access to personal support systems in the local area (Brown and Maisey, 1980; Education Commission of New South Wales, 1984; Maroya, 1985; Stoessiger, 1982; Turney et al., 1980)

- in general, beginning or inexperienced teachers should not be placed in isolated schools (Committee of Review: Education 2000 Submissions, 1986; Costigan, 1986; Education Commission of New South Wales, 1984; National Inquiry into Teacher Education, 1980; Standing Committee on Education and the Arts, 1976; Turney et al., 1980).

1.2.4 Pre-service education of teachers

General

Teacher preparation programs are seen by some writers (e.g. Darnell, 1981; Newman, 1985) as providing little in the way of preparation aimed specifically at teaching in rural schools.

Some teacher education practices are even perceived as being inimical to effective rural teaching. For example, the existence of separate courses and approaches for primary and secondary teachers inhibits teachers from exploiting the advantages of the K-10 (kindergarten to Year 10) organisation of some rural schools (Brown and Maisey, 1980). However, a survey of Queensland final-year teacher education students (Board of Teacher Education, 1983) found that a majority (61 per cent) felt they had been adequately prepared to teach in small country schools.

General reports have recommended that pre-service teaching programs include components which would help to prepare teachers for teaching and living in rural and remote areas (Australian Rural Adjustment Unit, 1984; Commission of Inquiry into Poverty, 1976; Committee of Review: Education 2000 Submissions, 1986; Costigan, 1986; Ministerial Advisory Committee, 1986; Turney et al., 1980). This is suggested either for all prospective teachers, since it is argued that most are likely to teach in rural areas at some stage in their careers (Darnell, 1981), or for those particularly wishing to teach in rural areas (Education Commission of New South Wales, 1984; Meyenn, 1983).

Topics seen as particularly relevant to rural postings include: teaching multi-age groups, individualising instruction, community education, environmental studies, experiential learning, adapting to rural communities, and motivating pupils (Johnston, 1981; Sher, 1981). Above all, perhaps, teacher candidates need to be made aware of the potential advantages of rural teaching and of how to capitalise on these (National Inquiry into Teacher Education, 1980). It has been suggested that a body of case study material on a variety of rural areas should be built up by the colleges with the assistance of employing authorities (Johnston, 1981).

Field experience

Frequently cited as a crucial or at least useful aspect of pre-service preparation for rural teaching is practice teaching in rural and isolated areas (Education Commission of New South Wales, 1984; Johnston, 1981; Maxwell, 1981; National Inquiry into Teacher Education, 1980). Such experience is seen as

necessary if courses on curriculum design for rural schools or on relating to the rural community are to have much impact (Turney et al., 1980).

Indeed, a Queensland Board of Teacher Education survey of final-year teacher education students in 1983 found that the option most preferred by students for better preparing them to teach in rural and isolated areas was teaching practice in country schools.

To be of maximum value, rural teaching practices must (i) be of sufficient duration - one to two weeks may be too short to enable students to appreciate fully the rural school and its community; and (ii) be in a sufficiently small community - practice in a large rural town may be similar to urban teaching practice (e.g. in having single grade classes) (Lake, 1983).

Teacher education institutions frequently state as obstacles to a more extensive form of rural practice the cost to institutions and students, the difficulty of supervision, and their limited control over the quality of supervising teachers. However, Lake questions the validity of these claimed obstacles, and also suggests alternatives to conventional rural practice (e.g. substituting competent on-site personnel in rural areas for lecturers to supervise students). Field experience in urban schools which have adopted the multigrade or family grouping model has been suggested as an alternative to practice teaching in rural schools. The Queensland Ministerial Advisory Committee on Distance Education (1986), although discounting mandatory practice teaching in remote locations as impractical and of limited generalisability, nevertheless recommended that, as far as practicable, pre-service courses involve at least one placement in a multigrade setting.

McSwan (1986) describes an apparently successful scheme for giving selected James Cook University student teachers practice teaching experience on rural properties and in small schools in western Queensland. At another Queensland institution (Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education) student teachers must spend one of their practicum placements in a multi-age situation.

1.2.5 Induction and in-service education of rural teachers

In general, it would appear that teachers are given no special pre-appointment induction or appropriate in-service preparation before appointment or transfer to a rural school (Education Commission of New South Wales, 1984). There are exceptions to this, an example being the meetings organised by the Queensland North-West Regional Office in Brisbane towards the end of each school year for teachers posted to that region (Board of Teacher Education, 1983). The Queensland Education Department also runs induction programs for beginning principals in small schools (Costigan, 1986).

Suggestions from the literature regarding induction include:

- provision for beginning teachers in isolated schools to have a reduced teaching load to allow them time to consult former lecturers, visit teacher centres, or attend appropriate in-service courses (National Inquiry into Teacher Education, 1980)
- provision of appropriate induction programs for all teachers moving into service in remote schools for the first time (Costigan, 1986; Education Commission of New South Wales, 1984; Ministerial Advisory Committee, 1986)
- provision of a community-based teacher induction process to increase teacher sensitivity to local culture (Brown and Maisey, 1980; Stoessiger, 1982).

In-service education

The increased provision of in-service education for rural teachers is recommended in much of the literature on rural education. Suggestions tend to be more concerned with the mode of presentation than with content.

Mode of presentation

The relative professional isolation of rural teachers means that they need special consideration as far as the provision of in-service education is concerned (Committee of Review: Education 2000 Submissions, 1986; Meyenn, 1983).

A major suggestion in the literature is to give priority to school-based in-service activities. Ways of doing this include: conducting workshops and seminars in particular schools; providing consultants knowledgeable about isolated communities and students to give advice and assistance to individual teachers or small groups of teachers about everyday teaching and about the development and implementation of special programs; introducing a number of mobile curriculum resource units containing relevant and up-to-date professional literature and teaching materials; creating abundant opportunities for professional cooperation and inter-school visitation by teachers (e.g. observation, discussion, teacher exchanges), especially for teachers in one- and two-teacher schools; developing special in-school support systems whereby specially skilled and experienced teachers assist less experienced colleagues; and matching an outside resource person with a local teacher on a regular basis to evaluate classroom practice and to explore possibilities for change (Brown and Maisey, 1980; Education Department of Western Australia, 1980; Ministerial Advisory Committee, 1986; Sher, 1981; Turney et al., 1980).

Based on a study of small Catholic primary schools in Queensland, Costigan (1986) recommends the greater availability of consultancy services in particular curriculum areas. In-service support for teachers in small schools in Queensland at present occurs largely through informal, teacher-initiated "mutual aid groups": staff of small schools in a geographical area meet periodically for some form of professional interaction. This is seen by Costigan as inadequate compared to support processes and programs available interstate and overseas.

The need is recognised for adequate provision of release time and relief staff to enable isolated teachers to participate in and benefit from in-service activities (Ministerial Advisory Committee, 1986; National Inquiry into Teacher Education, 1980; Turney et al., 1980). Turney et al. suggest the recruitment of an "in-service task force" of specially prepared and selected curriculum consultants, school counsellors, careers advisers, relief teachers and student teachers who would, with a number of fully-equipped mobile curriculum resource units, professional libraries and seminar/workshop rooms, travel to the various schools, meeting the in-service needs of all staff.

Professional development of isolated teachers involves a significant cost in travel and accommodation. To improve opportunities, it may be necessary for employing authorities to increase budgetary allocations (Education Commission of New South Wales, 1984).

One way of overcoming these costs is the greater use of distance learning techniques, especially those involving communications technology (Education Commission of New South Wales, 1984; Education Department of Western Australia, 1980; Ministerial Advisory Committee, 1986; National Inquiry into

Teacher Education, 1980). In particular, the Q-Net system in Queensland offers the potential to increase greatly the provision of in-service education to teachers in remote areas. The Queensland Department of Education, for example, transmits the Early Literacy In-Service Course (ELIC) through Q-Net, and TAFE and higher education institutions plan to make extensive use of Q-Net (Board of Teacher Education, 1987).

It is also suggested that there be greater continuity between pre-service and in-service education through the development of an effective relationship between teacher education institutions and employing authorities; for example, teacher education staff could be deployed in sustained school-based support and spend alternate periods in the field and in college (Johnston, 1981; Ministerial Advisory Committee, 1986).

Content

Teacher development activities for rural teachers should enable these teachers to tailor their activities to the social and organisational patterns of the particular school and its community (Education Department of Western Australia, 1980). This implies that teachers and community members should have an influential voice in both the content and conduct of in-service programs. Possible foci for such professional development activities might include:

- the value of community participation and the processes by which it can be fostered; establishing effective links with the community
- specific curriculum development skills and insights, e.g. procedures for introducing local adaptations to curriculum
- the community values and circumstances of life in the particular rural area examined from the perspective of recently-appointed staff
- different school organisation styles
- developing programs for gifted and other exceptional children; fostering the learning of children from all relevant socio-cultural groups
- devising and implementing programs suitable for multigrade class situations
- teaching techniques and strategies for small schools
- the utilisation of system-level support staff and resources and the regional support services available to teachers.

(Costigan, 1986; Education Department of Western Australia, 1980; National Inquiry into Teacher Education, 1980).

1.2.6 Other support services and conditions for rural teachers

Support services

For rural teachers, access to support and specialist assistance such as visiting advisory teachers and regional guidance officers is often difficult.

Cooperative efforts between nearby schools could help overcome some problems of smallness and isolation in relation to specialist teaching needs and curriculum development. Use of regional advisory staff and teacher-sharing schemes can allow schools to adopt procedures suited to the particular demographic or social needs of the community (Brown and Maisey, 1980). In Queensland, the Rural Secondary Support Scheme uses modern technology to provide secondary students in remote areas with access to subjects which they would not otherwise be able to study.

Greater access to itinerant teachers and access to resource centres through improved technology are recommended. A need is seen for part-time itinerant specialists, remedial teachers and advisory support staff in small isolated schools if, as proposed by the Queensland government, some specialist teaching is introduced in Year 7 (Committee of Review: Education 2000 Submissions, 1986; Department of Education, 1985).

Conditions

It is recognised that in order to make rural postings more attractive to teachers, and to generate and nurture genuine commitment to rural service among teachers, the following will be needed:

- a concerted and positive approach to promotion of service in remote schools
- sensitive staffing policies and practices (e.g. clustering arrangements to facilitate a balance of age and experience among staff in schools in a particular area)
- improved communications with remote schools
- improvements in working conditions (e.g. additional relief from face-to-face teaching for teachers in very small schools)
- improved teacher housing
- attractive career inducements.

(Committee of Review: Education 2000 Submissions, 1986; Education Commission of New South Wales, 1984; Maxwell, 1981; Ministerial Advisory Committee, 1986; Newman, 1985.)

Edwards (1981) notes that industrial incentives available to teachers in rural areas (e.g. housing subsidies, locality allowances and priority in transfer applications) have been seen more as overcoming the disadvantages of country appointment rather than as an incentive.

1.3 Summary

The Australian literature indicates that rural and isolated schools generally contain small numbers of pupils and teachers; these schools are staffed by young and inexperienced teachers who tend to stay in the school for a relatively short period of time and who are professionally, as well as geographically, isolated. Rural teachers generally come from outside the district and may have little understanding or knowledge of the local community or the needs of their pupils.

A greater proportion of pupils in rural and isolated schools than in city schools seem to be drawn from the lower socio-economic groups, and pupils in rural and isolated schools appear to be less motivated and have lower levels of educational achievement than do pupils in coastal and larger urban areas.

The rural school is often seen as the focal point of the community and there is often a great deal of parental and community involvement in the activities of the local school. This involvement can be a valuable means of support for teachers but can, on the other hand, lead to increased pressures on teachers unused to such a degree of parental interest.

While the literature indicates that teaching in rural and isolated schools occurs in a different context from teaching in urban schools, there appears to be little specific provision within pre-service teacher education programs to prepare teachers for service in rural schools. Induction and in-service support also appears to be

lacking. There is, nonetheless, no shortage of suggestions in the literature for improving the pre-service preparation and in-service support for teaching in rural and isolated areas.

As Tomlinson (1985) points out, however, the Australian literature on teaching in rural and isolated areas is somewhat limited. With respect to Queensland specifically, there is a lack of a strong research base on which to build recommendations and to implement suggestions for improving rural and isolated teaching. This study attempts to build such a research base by gathering the opinions and perceptions of teachers and community members on the context of rural and isolated teaching, pre-service teacher education and induction and in-service support.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

It was decided to use mailed questionnaires as the principal data collection technique. Four schedules were developed: two for western (rural and isolated) areas and two for coastal and near coastal areas. In each area both teachers and parent community members were surveyed. The questionnaire sought to gain an overview of teaching and living in these two different parts of the state. Because questionnaires are unable to capture important aspects of the complex interactions and networks within communities, a case study of one isolated western rural community was undertaken. This case study is to be reported separately.

2.1 Development of the questionnaires

The development of the questionnaires began with the design of two pilot questionnaires to be administered in western rural and isolated areas. Draft pilot teacher and community questionnaires were reviewed by the Research Committee of the Board of Teacher Education and by a number of consultants with specialised knowledge of or expertise in teaching in rural and isolated areas. The pilot teacher questionnaire sought information on: personal details, present teaching appointment, pre-service teacher education, problems associated with teaching in small rural towns and help available, perceptions of school, community and teacher role and career aspirations. The pilot community questionnaire sought details concerning: personal information, opinions of the local area, desirable qualities of teachers, attitudes towards teacher mobility, community responsibility towards teachers and schools, school-community relationships, opinions about teacher education, and attitudes towards school employing authority support for teachers and schools.

The pilot questionnaires contained forced-choice items as well as many open-ended questions.

Both questionnaires were mailed to fourteen schools in north-western Queensland. These schools comprised government and non-government primary and secondary schools. Principals were asked to pass the appropriate questionnaires on to teachers, and, in selected schools, to parents, for them to complete and return in a reply-paid envelope. In all, 107 teachers and principals and 142 parents were requested to complete trial questionnaires. Forty-three teacher questionnaires and 45 community questionnaires were returned, representing response rates of 40 per cent and 32 per cent respectively.

The purpose of the trialling was two-fold: first, to ensure the appropriateness of the wording of particular questions and to discover any ambiguities in interpretation by respondents; and second, to obtain from answers to the open-ended questions, categories of possible responses for use in the questionnaire to be employed in the main survey. Provision was included for respondents to give information and opinion overlooked in the schedule.

Following analysis of the pilot questionnaires, both teacher and community questionnaires were revised and again reviewed by the Board's Research Committee and the consultants to the project. Some new questions were added as a result of this process. The final questionnaire to teachers in rural and isolated areas comprised 44 questions, including a final question which asked for general comments. Apart from the "general comments" question, there were six open-ended questions on the teacher questionnaire. The teacher questionnaire sought information on the following broad areas:

- personal details (e.g. age, time in district, type of school attended)
- present teaching situation (e.g. type and size of school)
- pre-service teacher education
- teacher attitudes towards present teaching situation
- desirable teacher qualities
- induction and in-service support
- future career plans.

The final community questionnaire for rural and isolated areas contained 23 questions. The sole open-ended question was the final one inviting general comments. The areas in which the community questionnaire sought information were:

- personal details (e.g. age, time in district, type of school attended, number of children)
- desirable teacher qualities
- attitudes towards schools and teachers
- opinions of pre-service teacher education.

It was considered that it would be very useful to contrast and compare teaching in rural and isolated areas with teaching in coastal and near coastal areas of Queensland. Data from coastal and near coastal teachers and parents would provide baseline data and would help to identify those issues which were specific to teaching in rural and isolated areas. Accordingly, modified forms of the teacher and parent questionnaires were developed for completion by coastal and near coastal groups. Some questions were able to be used on both forms of the questionnaires, but other questions needed to be modified to make them applicable to non-western respondents. A number of questions which had a specific rural focus were omitted. The questionnaire to coastal and near coastal teachers contained 37 questions and the questionnaire to coastal and near coastal parents contained 20 questions.

Samples of the questionnaires are presented in Appendix 1.

2.2 Definition of the study areas

At the time the survey was undertaken, the Queensland Department of Education administered education in Queensland through ten educational regions. These regions provide a convenient means of defining rural and isolated areas.

The three most remote regions are the South-Western, North-Western and Peninsula regions. As the Peninsula region has its own particular characteristics, population structure, ethnic groups and economic base, which distinguish it somewhat from the other remote areas, it was decided to exclude this region from the rural and isolated study area. The Central and Northern regions extend a considerable way inland, and some of the shires from these regions were therefore also included in the rural and isolated area. The remaining educational regions contained mainly coastal and near coastal areas and these were included in the coastal and near coastal areas, although the shire of Balonne in the Darling Downs region and the city of Charters Towers in the Northern region were excluded.

The study areas therefore comprised:

Western rural and isolated area

North-Western region
South-Western region
Shires of Belyando, Peak Downs, Emerald and Bauhinia in Central region

Figure 2.1: Study areas

Shire of Dalrymple in Northern region

Coastal and near coastal area

Brisbane-North region
Brisbane-South region
Brisbane-West region
Darling Downs region excluding the shire of Balonne
Wide Bay region
Central region excluding the shires of Belyando, Peak Downs, Emerald and Bauhinia
Northern region excluding the shire of Dalrymple and city of Charters Towers.

The above areas are shown in Figure 2.1.

2.3 Selection of samples

In both the western and coastal areas, schools were stratified according to geographical location (shire within region) and type (government preschool, government primary, government secondary, non-government primary and non-government secondary). Within the rural and isolated area, half of the schools in each stratum were chosen for inclusion in the sample. All of the teachers from the selected schools were included in the rural and isolated teacher sample. The parents of pupils in a sub-sample of the schools were chosen for the parent sample. In the smaller schools, all of the parents were included, while for the larger schools, only parents of Year 7 pupils (for primary schools) or of Year 10 pupils (for secondary schools) formed part of the sample.

These sampling procedures resulted in the selection of teachers in 97 rural and isolated schools, comprising 59 government primary schools, six government secondary schools, 14 non-government primary schools, two non-government secondary schools and 16 preschools. Parents from a sub-sample of fourteen of these schools were also selected. These were parents of pupils in nine government primary schools, two non-government primary schools, two government secondary schools and one non-government secondary school.

A similar strategy was used to select schools from the coastal and near coastal area of Queensland. Because there are many more schools and teachers in the coastal and city areas, only one in thirty of these schools was chosen in the sample. This resulted in a total of 53 schools, comprising 26 government primary schools, seven non-government primary schools, four government secondary schools, three non-government secondary schools and 13 preschools being selected. The parent sample was drawn from twelve of these schools, comprising seven government primary schools, two non-government primary schools, two government secondary schools and one non-government secondary school.

2.4 Administration of questionnaires

In October and November 1985, principals of the selected schools were forwarded a letter explaining the purposes of the study and its potential outcomes. In the letter, principals were asked for their assistance in distributing questionnaires to teachers, and, where appropriate, to parents of pupils at their school. Sufficient copies of the teacher and parent questionnaires were included for distribution. Principals were also asked to return a form indicating the number of parent questionnaires distributed. In the event, six principals did not return this form, so an estimate of the number of parents given questionnaires in these schools was made for the purpose of calculating the size of the total sample of parents. The number of teachers in each school was known from the Board of Teacher Education's records.

The questionnaires to parents and teachers included a covering letter again explaining the purposes of the study and including instructions for completion and return. The covering letter also assured teachers and parents of the confidentiality of their response. Respondents were asked to return questionnaires using a reply-paid envelope which was included with each questionnaire. Two follow-up letters were forwarded to principals seeking their cooperation in improving the response rate.

The final response rates achieved are shown below in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Response rates to questionnaires

Group	No. in sample	No. returned	Response rate %
Rural and isolated teachers	854	504	59
Rural and isolated parents	645	215	33
Coastal and near coastal teachers	794	405	51
Coastal and near coastal parents	540	179	33

The final response rates of 59 per cent for rural teachers, 33 per cent for rural parents, 51 per cent for non-rural teachers and 33 per cent for non-rural parents may be regarded as somewhat disappointing, yet not atypical of response rates for surveys of this type. As all questionnaires were forwarded through principals, it is possible that some questionnaires may not have reached their intended audience thus producing a lower apparent response rate. The fact that questionnaires were forwarded near the end of the school year, which is usually a busy time for schools, may also have adversely influenced the number of responses. A third factor contributing to the relatively poor response rate may have been that insufficient time was allowed between mailing of questionnaires and the deadline for responses printed in the instructions for completing the questionnaire. While over two weeks was allowed between mailing and the response deadline, some respondents in rural and isolated areas reported that they had not received their questionnaires until the deadline had passed. Some potential respondents may therefore have been deterred from replying because of a belief that their questionnaire would not be used if returned after the closing date.

The response rate among the various sub-groups was somewhat uneven. Generally, the response rate from government schools was higher than that for non-government schools.

For the western teachers, the response rate ranged from 38 per cent for teachers in non-government secondary schools to 86 per cent for preschool teachers, although only very small samples of this latter category of teachers were taken. Of the three larger subgroups of rural and isolated teachers, response rates varied from 55 per cent for government secondary schools to 67 per cent for non-government primary schools.

The highest response rate for rural and isolated parents was 39 per cent for government primary schools, while there was no reply from the one non-government secondary school in western Queensland whose parents were asked to return questionnaires.

Response rates for coastal teachers varied between 27 per cent for non-government secondary schools and 57 per cent for government primary schools. For coastal parents, the lowest response rate was from non-government secondary schools (8 per cent) and the highest from government primary schools (44 per cent).

2.5 Analysis and reporting of results

The main method of analysis used was the simple calculation of the number and proportion of respondents who chose each alternative to each question. These frequency tables are reported in the following chapters of the report. Where appropriate, two-part tables, showing the responses of western rural and isolated respondents, and coastal and near coastal respondents are used.

In addition to the simple frequencies, a large number of cross-tabulations was performed for rural and isolated respondents only. The purpose of these was to determine if there was any relationship between certain characteristics of rural and isolated teachers and parents and their attitudes towards and experiences of living and teaching in western Queensland. The detailed tables giving the results of significant cross-tabulations are presented in Appendix 3. Comment is made on these in the text where appropriate.

2.6 Summary

Information for this study was gained from questionnaire responses of teachers and parents in both western rural and isolated areas and coastal and near coastal areas of Queensland. In all, responses were received from 504 rural teachers, 215 rural parents, 405 coastal teachers and 179 coastal parents. The respective response rates for the four groups were 59 per cent, 33 per cent, 51 per cent and 33 per cent.

CHAPTER 3

THE CONTEXT: BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON TEACHERS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

3.1 Personal details of the teachers

There was the same proportion of male and female teachers in both western and coastal schools. As Table 3.1 shows, there were nearly twice as many female as male respondents.

Table 3.1: Sex of teacher respondents

	WESTERN (N=504)	COASTAL (N=405)
SEX	%	%
Male	36	35
Female	64	65

The ratio of married to single teachers, however, (Table 3.2) was markedly different. In the western sample there were slightly more single teachers than married (54 per cent cf. 42 per cent), whereas in the coastal sector, more than twice as many teachers were married as single.

Table 3.2: Marital status of teacher respondents

	WESTERN (N=503)	COASTAL (N=405)
MARITAL STATUS	%	%
Married	42	68
Single	54	26
Other	4	6

Table 3.2 relates closely to Table 3.3, the age of teacher respondents. As there were many more married coastal teachers than single, there were also many older teachers. To be specific, 62 per cent of coastal teachers were 30 years of age or over and 38 per cent were under 30, whereas in western areas only 34 per cent were 30 or over while 67 per cent were less than 30 years of age. Of even more significance are the facts that in the western study area 41 per cent were less than 25, while in the coastal area only 14 per cent were in the same age bracket.

Table 3.3: Age of teacher respondents

AGE	WESTERN (N=504) %	COASTAL (N=405) %
< 25	41	14
25-29	26	24
30-39	21	36
> 40	13	26

Teachers in western schools were very much less likely to stay in the one school for an extended period. Table 3.4 shows that more than twice as many western school teachers had been in the district for less than four years compared to coastal teachers (78 per cent cf. 36 per cent). Only 11 per cent of western teachers had lived for more than seven years in the district while almost half (49 per cent) of the coastal teachers had spent that amount of time in the one town. Still, there is a core of between one-quarter and one-fifth of teachers in western Queensland schools who appear to be relatively stable, having lived in the same town or district for at least four years.

Table 3.4: Teachers' length of residence in present town or district

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE (YEARS)	WESTERN (N=504) %	COASTAL (N=403) %
< 1	32	14
1-3	46	22
4-6	11	15
7-9	2	11
> 10	9	38

As may be expected, because teachers in western areas move more frequently they were also less likely to have relations living in the district. This is demonstrated by Table 3.5 where more than three times as many coastal teachers had relations living in the area. In the western area, females were more likely than males to have relations nearby (see Appendix 3, Table A.3.1).

Table 3.5: Teacher respondents with relations living in present town or district

LOCAL RELATIONS	WESTERN (N=501) %	COASTAL (N=402) %
Yes	14	52
No	86	48

Generally, teachers from both western and coastal areas had similar types of schooling (see Tables 3.6, 3.7 and 3.8). By far the majority went to day schools for their primary years (99, 98 per cent) and most went to day schools for their secondary education (90, 87 per cent). Boarding school was the next most popular alternative (10, 13 per cent) and comparatively very few were educated through correspondence school (approximately 1 per cent).

Table 3.6: Type of schooling of teacher respondents

	PRIMARY		SECONDARY	
TYPE OF SCHOOLING	WESTERN (N=488) %	COASTAL (N=397) %	WESTERN (N=494) %	COASTAL (N=400) %
Correspondence	1	1	< 1	-
Day	99	98	90	87
Boarding	< 1	1	10	13

The size of towns that teachers were educated in did not differ greatly between western and coastal respondents although the number of western teachers educated in larger centres was slightly less, and in smaller centres slightly higher.

Table 3.7: Place of schooling of teacher respondents

	PRIMARY		SECONDARY	
	WESTERN (N=398)	COASTAL (N=399)	WESTERN (N=393)	COASTAL (N=403)
PLACE OF SCHOOLING	%	%	%	%
Capital city	34	40	37	47
Large provincial centre (> 20,000)	18	21	27	28
Medium country town (10,000-19,999)	7	6	9	10
Country town (1,000-9,999)	21	19	21	14
Small town (< 1,000)	19	14	6	2
Property	1	1	1	-

Size of place of schooling corresponds to the number of teachers who were in the schools where the teachers were educated. Slightly more western than coastal teachers were educated in smaller schools, although generally the percentages are very similar.

Table 3.8: Number of teachers at schools attended by teacher respondents

	PRIMARY		SECONDARY	
	WESTERN (N=454)	COASTAL (N=355)	WESTERN (N=460)	COASTAL (N=346)
NUMBER OF TEACHERS	%	%	%	%
1	7	5	-	-
2-3	9	7	-	1
4-5	6	4	2	1
6-7	13	12	4	3
8-10	17	17	8	5
11-15	13	15	9	8
16-25	19	27	18	23
> 25	15	14	59	60

3.2 The communities in which teachers taught

Most of the teacher respondents had not spent their childhood in their present town or district. This is particularly so in the rural area where 97 per cent were from a different district. This percentage was lower in coastal areas - 76 per cent (Table 3.9).

Table 3.9: Proportion of teacher respondents who spent childhood in present town or district

CHILDHOOD SPENT IN PRESENT TOWN OR DISTRICT	WESTERN (N=501) %	COASTAL (N=404) %
Yes	3	24
No	97	76

Of the teachers who had spent their childhood in a different area, the majority were living in an area dissimilar in population to that of their childhood. Less than 20 per cent in the western and coastal samples were living in a town or district of similar size (Table 3.10).

Table 3.10: Similarity of teachers' childhood town or district to size of present location

TOWN OR DISTRICT OF SIMILAR POPULATION	WESTERN (N=481) %	COASTAL (N=305) %
Yes	18	17
No	82	83

Three-quarters of coastal teachers, compared to one-third of the western teachers, taught in towns with a population of over 5,000. Only one-tenth of coastal teachers taught in towns with a population of under 1,000 whereas one-quarter of rural respondents did (Table 3.11).

Table 3.11: Town size of teachers' current appointment

POPULATION	WESTERN (N=492) %	COASTAL (N=381) %
0-199	8	2
200-499	7	2
500-999	10	5
1,000-2,499	22	8
2,500-5,000	19	8
Over 5,000 (western only)	34	
5,000-9,999 (coastal only)		3
10,000-19,999 (coastal only)		6
20,000-100,000 (coastal only)		36
> 100,000 (coastal only)		30

The major occupations of residents in the town or district were seen by teachers to be very different in the western and coastal areas (Table 3.12). The major industries in the western areas, according to the teachers were: beef, wool, mining and crop production. The major industries of the coastal areas were: crop production, tourism, manufacturing and dairy farming.

Table 3.12: Major occupations of local residents

INDUSTRY	WESTERN (N=496) %	COASTAL (N=385) %
Crop production	31	40
Fishing	-	16
Wool production	43	1
Beef production	56	13
Dairy farming	1	20
Mining	37	11
Railway	23	14
Tourism	2	33
Manufacturing	-	31
Others (coastal only)	-	36

(Note: Respondents could choose more than one alternative.)

3.3 Information about the school

Table 3.13 shows the number of full-time teachers in schools in the western and coastal areas. In both cases most teachers came from schools that had more than fifteen teachers (western 64 per cent, coastal 80 per cent). However, there were more western than coastal schools with low numbers of teachers, particularly the very small schools with under six teachers (western 17 per cent, coastal 7 per cent).

Table 3.13: Number of full-time teachers at present school

NUMBER OF TEACHERS	WESTERN (N=499) %	COASTAL (N=405) %
1	3	2
2-3	9	4
4-5	5	1
6-7	2	2
8-10	7	4
11-15	11	8
16-25	31	28
> 25	33	52

As expected, there were differences between western primary and secondary teachers with respect to the size of the school in which they taught. Eight per cent of western primary teachers taught in one-teacher schools and a further 29 per cent taught in schools with between two and seven teachers on staff. By contrast, 83 per cent of western secondary teachers taught in schools with more than fifteen teachers (Table A.3.2, Appendix 3).

Of the teachers in western primary schools, men were much more likely than women to be in one-teacher schools; women, on the other hand, were more likely than men to be teaching in larager primary schools of more than fifteen teachers (Table A.3.3). A larger proportion of teachers in western government primary schools than in western Catholic primary schools taught in larger schools of more than fifteen teachers, but there was a greater number of government than Catholic teachers teaching in one-teacher schools (Table A.3.4).

In both areas the majority of teachers taught in government schools (85, 83 per cent). Most other teachers were from Catholic schools (15, 12 per cent). There were no other private schools represented in the western areas but 5 per cent of coastal teachers taught in non-Catholic private schools (Table 3.14).

Table 3.14: Type of school

TYPE OF SCHOOL	WESTERN (N=502) %	COASTAL (N=405) %
Government	85	83
Catholic	15	12
Other private	_	5

Three-quarters of teacher respondents were full-time teachers (Table 3.15). Most of the others were administrative or specialist staff. For the most part, percentages in different types of teaching positions were similar in the western and coastal areas. One main exception was the larger number of teaching principals in western schools (10 per cent cf. 4 per cent).

Table 3.15: Present position of teacher

POSITION	WESTERN (N=503) %	COASTAL (N=405) %
Senior administrative staff		
Non-teaching principal	3	3
Teaching principal	10	4
Non-teaching administrative staff	< 1	2
Teaching administrative staff	6	6
Specialist	7	6
Full-time teacher	73	76
Part-time teacher	1	2
Other	1	1

Over half the principals who responded were responsible for a primary school (Table 3.16). Most of the others were in charge of preschools or secondary schools although quite a large proportion, particularly in the western area, had more than one area of responsibility (western 25 per cent, coastal 14 per cent).

Generally, there was very little difference between the western and coastal sectors when considering areas that classroom teachers were working in. The large majority (87-93 per cent) came from the primary and secondary areas. In the western area the proportions of primary and secondary teachers were very similar. In the coastal sample there were more primary than secondary teachers. It is interesting to note than 9 per cent of teachers in western Queensland compared with only 2 per cent of teachers in coastal Queensland taught pupils at more than one level of the school system.

Table 3.16: Areas of responsibility of teachers

	PRINCIPALS		TEACHERS	
	WESTERN (N=71)	COASTAL (N=31)	WESTERN (N=482)	COASTAL (N=383)
AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY	%	%	%	%
Preschool	14	26	4	4
Primary	52	55	42	55
Secondary	9	3	45	38
Preschool/primary	11	7	3	< 1
Primary/secondary	1	-	4	1
Preschool/primary/ secondary	13	7	1	< 1
Special	-	3	1	< 1

As would be expected, a greater number of teachers in rural schools teach multiple year levels. Forty-eight per cent of rural teachers were responsible for more than one grade while only 37 per cent of coastal teachers had multiple grades (Table 3.17).

Table 3.17: Number of year levels taught

	WESTERN (N=494)	COASTAL (N=400)
NUMBER OF YEAR LEVELS	%	%
1	48	57
2	17	10
3	14	13
4	7	9
> 4	10	5
Other/not applicable	4	5

Primary teachers were more likely to be teaching multi-year levels. As Table A.3.5 in Appendix 3 shows, 59 per cent of primary teachers in the western area taught more than one year level at any one time, whereas only 41 per cent of secondary teachers had that same responsibility.

There was a much greater proportion of western schools with small class numbers compared to the coastal schools. Seventy-three per cent of western respondents had classes of under 26 pupils while only half of coastal teachers had classes of that size or less (Table 3.18).

Table 3.18: Average class size

CLASS SIZE	WESTERN (N=498) %	COASTAL (N=403) %
< 15	23	7
16-20	22	12
21-25	28	31
26-30	22	37
> 30	3	9
Not applicable	4	5

Many of the larger classes in the rural area were primary, for as can be seen in Table A.3.6 in Appendix 3, there were twice as many primary as secondary classes with more than 25 pupils.

3.4 Personal details of community respondents

One-quarter of the respondents from the community were male and three-quarters were female. There was virtually no difference between the western and coastal areas in terms of the sex of the respondents (Table 3.19).

Table 3.19: Sex of community respondents

SEX	WESTERN (N=214) %	COASTAL (N=178) %
Male	23	25
Female	77	75

The great majority of respondents were over 30 years of age (western 89 per cent and coastal 98 per cent) with over half of all respondents being in the 30-39 age group. In terms of their age there was very little difference between the western and coastal respondents although the number of younger community members replying in the western area was higher than in coastal cities and towns (10 per cent cf. 2 per cent) (Table 3.20).

Table 3.20: Age of community respondents

AGE	WESTERN (N=214) %	COASTAL (N=178) %
< 25	1	1
25-29	9	1
30-39	52	55
> 40	37	43

As recorded in Table 3.21, approximately half of all community respondents had lived in their present town or district for more than ten years. The other half were fairly evenly spread between the less-than-one-year, one-to-three-years, four-to-six-years, and seven-to-nine-years categories. There was very little difference in length of residence between the western and coastal respondents.

Table 3.21: Length of residence in present town of community respondents

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE	WESTERN (N=212) %	COASTAL (N=176) %
< 1 year	10	9
1-3 years	14	13
4-6 years	13	16
7-9 years	10	13
> 10 years	54	49

In comparison with the western area, many more coastal community respondents had relations living in their present town or district (Table 3.22). In the western community, almost half had relations living in the area, whereas in the coastal area almost two-thirds had relations in the town or district.

Table 3.22: Community respondents with relations living locally

LOCAL RELATIVES	WESTERN (N=212) %	COASTAL (N=176) %
Yes	47	63
No	53	36

More of the western community respondents were educated by correspondence and in boarding school than were the coastal respondents. This was especially so for their secondary education (primary 9 per cent cf. 5 per cent, secondary 22 per cent cf. 10 per cent). In most cases, however, respondents had attended day school.

Table 3.23: Type of schooling of community respondents

	PRIMARY		SECONDARY	
	WESTERN (N=202) %	COASTAL (N=172) %	WESTERN (N=185) %	COASTAL (N=154) %
Correspondence	6	3	2	2
Day	91	95	79	90
Boarding	3	2	20	8

As Table 3.24 indicates, slightly more of the western respondents were educated in schools in smaller towns than were the coastal respondents. In the primary area, 32 per cent of western respondents were educated in a large centre while 46 per cent of coastal respondents had this experience. Similarly, 52 per cent of western respondents had their secondary education in a large centre compared with 62 per cent of coastal community respondents. The slightly smaller difference in the secondary percentages could be accounted for by those western respondents who attended boarding schools in large centres.

Table 3.24: Place of schooling of community respondents

	PRIMARY		SECONDARY	
	WESTERN (N=207) %	COASTAL (N=177) %	WESTERN (N=183) %	COASTAL (N=157) %
Capital city	16	28	24	30
Large provincial centre (> 20,000)	16	18	28	32
Medium country town (10,000-19,999)	9	7	14	12
Country town (1,000-9,999)	32	22	30	22
Small town (< 1,000)	23	24	4	4
Property	4	1	1	1

The level of education of western and coastal community respondents was virtually the same for each group (Tables 3.25, 3.26). Forty-two per cent of each group had completed other qualifications since leaving school, over one-quarter had at least completed the senior years of secondary school and almost half had at least completed junior but had not completed senior.

Table 3.25: Highest level of formal education completed by community respondents

LEVEL OF EDUCATION	WESTERN (N=214) %	COASTAL (N=178) %
None	-	-
Some primary	3	2
Completed primary	9	8
Some junior secondary	13	16
Completed junior secondary	39	40
Some senior secondary	7	8
Completed senior secondary	15	12
Tertiary	15	14

Table 3.26: Other qualifications completed by community respondents since leaving secondary school (includes tertiary from Table 3.25)

	WESTERN (N=205) %	COASTAL (N=170) %
Yes	42	42
No	59	58

Table 3.27: Structure of school attendance of community respondents' children

CHILDREN	WESTERN (N=215) %	COASTAL (N=179) %
Not yet commenced school	23	15
In preschool	8	11
In primary	74	74
In junior secondary	46	57
In senior secondary	21	15
Left school	26	28

Table 3.27 indicates that respondents from western areas had slightly younger families than their coastal counterparts and perhaps less opportunity to send their young children to preschool. The full distribution of the school attendance of community respondents' children is shown in Table A.3.7 in Appendix 3.

As Table 3.28 reports, children of respondents in both western and coastal study areas mostly attend state schools (86 per cent and 89 per cent respectively). However, more western respondents' children (6 per cent) than coastal (1 per cent) go to boarding schools.

Table 3.28: Types of schools attended by community respondents' children

TYPE OF SCHOOL	WESTERN %*	COASTAL %
Correspondence	1	1
Government	86	89
Non-government day	11	13
Non-government boarding	6	1

* Totals exceed 100 per cent because children in one family may attend different school types.

The percentages of community respondents who work in government employment was the same for both study areas. In each case 30 per cent of those who responded worked for local, state or commonwealth government.

Table 3.29: Public and private sector employment of community respondents

GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT	WESTERN (N=210) %	COASTAL (N=173) %
Yes	30	30
No	70	70

As shown in Table 3.30, it appears that many occupations were represented equally among respondents in both study areas. In the western areas, however, there were more graziers, drivers, miners and farm workers. On the other hand in the coastal areas there were more lower professionals, armed forces/police, craftspersons, and process workers.

Table 3.30: Occupation of main income earner

OCCUPATION (ABS categories)	WESTERN (N=195) %	COASTAL (N=152) %
Upper professional	5	5
Lower professional	10	15
Grazier and other farmer	18	13
Managerial	6	6
Self-employed shop proprietor	3	3
Clerical	12	13
Armed forces/police	1	5
Craftsperson	15	19
Shop assistant	1	1
Process worker	7	10
Driver	9	2
Domestic worker	5	5
Miner	2	0
Farm worker	7	2
Labourer	2	1

3.5 Summary

Of all the teachers who responded, two-thirds were female. Western rural and isolated respondents were more likely to be younger and single. They were not likely to stay in the district long and probably did not have relations nearby.

Three-quarters of the community respondents were female, nine-tenths were over 30 years old, half had been in the area for over 10 years, almost half had achieved other qualifications since leaving school and a third of main income earners worked in government employment. Most of their children attended government schools. More of the western respondents had been to boarding school at some time during their education, although most had not done so.

Approximately half of the western community respondents had relations living in their present town or district compared to about two-thirds of the coastal respondents.

Three-quarters of the teacher respondents were full-time classroom teachers and a large majority taught in government schools. Most teachers taught in schools with more than fifteen teachers although more western schools had lower numbers of teachers.

Principals in western areas were more likely to be teaching and/or have responsibility for more than one educational sector, e.g. primary and preschool. Teachers in rural and isolated areas were more likely to teach in multi-year level situations, particularly if they were in a primary school. Generally, western classes tended to have fewer children, and classes in western primary schools tended to be larger than classes in western secondary schools.

CHAPTER 4

CURRENT TEACHING SITUATION

4.1 Appointment and previous experience

Teachers teaching in western rural and isolated schools had relatively little teaching experience. Fourteen per cent of these teachers were in their first year of teaching and a further 27 per cent had been teaching for between one and three years.

Coastal and near coastal respondents generally had greater teaching experience than did their western colleagues and were slightly more likely to have been teaching immediately prior to their present appointment. For example, 50 per cent of coastal teachers had been teaching for ten years or more compared to 23 per cent of western teachers. On the other hand, 41 per cent of western teachers had been teaching for three years or less compared to only 16 per cent of coastal teachers (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Length of teaching experience

NUMBER OF YEARS	WESTERN (N=490) %	COASTAL (N=398) %
First year	14	6
1-3 years	27	10
4-6 years	26	19
7-9 years	10	15
10-14 years	12	20
15 years or more	11	30

Most of the teachers in western rural and isolated schools had been teaching at their present schools for short periods of time. For example, only 17 per cent of these teachers had been at their present school for at least four years, while 41 per cent had been teaching at their present school for less than two years. This compares with the 40 per cent of teachers in schools in coastal and near coastal areas who had been at their present school for at least four years. The full distributions are shown below in Table 4.2. Western teachers with the greater length of time teaching at their present school were more likely to be married than single and to have completed their pre-service education before 1980. More western primary teachers than secondary teachers had been at their present school for four years or longer (see Table A.4.1, Appendix 3).

Table 4.2: Length of time teaching at present school

NUMBER OF YEARS	WESTERN (N=500) %	COASTAL (N=401) %
Less than 1 year	11	6
1 year	30	23
2 years	29	15
3 years	13	14
4-5 years	9	14
6-10 years	6	19
11-20 years	2	7
More than 20 years	-	2

The previous appointment of some one-third of both study groups of teachers had been in a medium or small country town (Table 4.3). The major difference between the two groups, however, was the percentage of teachers for whom their current position was their first teaching appointment. While 30 per cent of western respondents were beginning teachers, this was the case for only 15 per cent of coastal respondents.

Table 4.3: Teachers' previous appointment

PREVIOUS APPOINTMENT	WESTERN (N=484) %	COASTAL (N=393) %
No previous appointment	30	15
Capital city	14	27
Large provincial centre (20,000 or over)	19	22
Medium country town (10,000 to 19,999)	4	7
Country town (1,000 to 9,999)	18	15
Small town (500 to 999)	12	13
Less than 500	3	1

Coastal teachers were more likely to have been appointed, transferred or promoted to a school on their list of preferences. As Table 4.4 shows, slightly more than half were appointed to schools which had been their first or second choice. By comparison, some 60 per cent of rural respondents had not sought a transfer or were

teaching in schools which they had placed lower than their third choice or had not listed as a choice.

Female teachers and teaching staff in western schools were more likely than their male or administrative counterparts to have included their present school among their first three preferences. A similar difference was apparent between teachers who had lived in the district for more than six years and those who had been residents for less than that time (see Table A.4.2 in Appendix 3).

Table 4.4: Order of preference given by teachers to their current school

ORDER	WESTERN (N=499) %	COASTAL (N=383) %
First choice	30	41
Second choice	6	10
Third choice	3	3
Greater than third choice	20	8
Not listed as a choice	23	23
Did not seek a transfer	18	15

Over two-thirds of the teachers currently teaching in western schools were satisfied or very satisfied when they heard of their appointment to their present school while 21 per cent of these teachers were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied (Table 4.5). Given that some teachers may resign rather than accept a posting to a rural or isolated school, the proportion of teachers notified of such an appointment (as opposed to the proportion who actually took up a posting) and who were dissatisfied may be somewhat higher. Nonetheless, only 18 per cent of teachers in rural and isolated schools had become more dissatisfied since commencing teaching in their new position; most had become more satisfied or their feelings had remained unchanged. These responses are tabulated below in Table 4.6.

Respondents from coastal schools, in the main, reported feeling pleased when they first heard of their appointment, with 50 per cent indicating they had been very satisfied, no doubt because these schools had frequently been included in their preference list. Generally their feelings had remained unchanged or had become more positive since taking up their appointment.

Table 4.5: Reaction of teacher on hearing of appointment

REACTION	WESTERN (N=498) %	COASTAL (N=400) %
Very satisfied	34	50
Satisfied	34	35
Dissatisfied	11	6
Very dissatisfied	10	4
No particular reaction	10	4

Table 4.6: Changes in satisfaction since taking up appointment

RESPONSE	WESTERN (N=499) %	COASTAL (N=402) %
Became more satisfied	50	46
Became more dissatisfied	18	18
Remained about the same	32	36

There were some significant differences among western respondents. Married teachers were more satisfied with their appointments than were single teachers. This was also the case for those who had been living in the district for more than six years.

Those in administrative positions also reported greater satisfaction on hearing of their appointments than did those in non-administrative positions (see Table A.4.3, Appendix 3).

From the variety of reasons teachers in rural schools gave for increased satisfaction three broad groupings emerged: factors associated with the school to which the teacher had been appointed, factors associated with the community and the teacher's relationship with it, and factors associated with the teacher's professional development or personal life.

The first grouping was the most common with teachers describing, for example, the pleasure and satisfaction gained from working in the school, good staff relationships, friendly, receptive children and the responsibility and autonomy associated with their work.

Comments describing factors associated with the community and the teacher's relationship with it were also commonly mentioned by teachers as leading to increased satisfaction. The most frequent of this group of comments referred to the challenge of adjusting to a new lifestyle, enjoying new experiences and meeting new friends. Also mentioned, but less frequently, were teachers' increased satisfaction due to their becoming involved in and a respected member of the community and to good relationships with parents and the community generally.

Small numbers of respondents indicated that their increased satisfaction could be traced to factors associated with their professional development or personal life. For example, comments referred to increased confidence and knowledge of teaching, to becoming familiar with the school and the resources available and to settling into teaching.

Respondents from coastal schools described similar experiences although much less emphasis was given to community factors. Again, the most frequently-given reasons for increasing satisfaction referred to the teacher's working environment, for example, good staff relationships or good school climate and friendly, receptive children.

Coastal teachers' comments referring to community issues included the challenge of learning a new lifestyle, enjoying new experiences, meeting new friends, becoming involved in and a respected member of the community and forming good relationships with parents and community. As noted earlier, comments of this type were made much more frequently by teachers in western schools as a reason for their becoming more satisfied since taking up their present appointment.

Increased professional competence and personal factors generally made little contribution to coastal teachers' feelings of increased satisfaction, possibly because of their greater teaching experience. For example, increased confidence and knowledge of teaching and becoming familiar with the school and the resources available were each mentioned by fewer than ten teachers.

As reported earlier, only a minority of respondents reported increased dissatisfaction since taking up their new appointments. The bulk of comments from western rural and isolated teachers regarding dissatisfaction referred to aspects of school life. Teachers, for example, complained of children's poor attitudes to learning, of a heavy workload and excessive responsibilities, of the lack of professional support (for example, few experienced teachers on staff). Some teachers, however, did mention community factors: parental attitudes and poor relationships with parents, a dislike of the community, lack of recreational and entertainment facilities. Each of this last group of comments was made by ten or fewer teachers.

The responses of coastal teachers who had become more dissatisfied were similar with most identifying aspects of school life as the cause of their increased dissatisfaction. These included children's poor attitudes to learning, poor relationship with the principal and administrative staff, heavy workload and excessive responsibilities. Parental attitudes and poor relationships with parents led to increased dissatisfaction for only a small number of teachers in schools in coastal and near coastal areas.

4.2 Personal and professional factors associated with current appointment

Teachers were asked to comment on a range of factors which impinged upon their personal and professional lives in their present teaching situation. These questions addressed issues such as staff relations in the school, aspects of the teacher's classroom teaching, the characteristics of the students for which the school caters, career opportunities available to teachers in the area, professional support available, aspects of community life and parental attitudes to education and parents' relationship with teachers.

Little disharmony was reported among members of staff in either study group as Table 4.7 shows. In both cases, relationships were generally described as happy and friendly and staff members were perceived as responsible, cooperative and having initiative. Among western respondents, the view that relationships were happy and friendly was held particularly strongly by administrators, teachers in Catholic schools

and teachers in smaller primary schools. The view that staff members were responsible and cooperative was held particularly strongly by teachers in Catholic schools and teachers in smaller primary schools (see Tables A.4.4 and A.4.5, Appendix 3).

Table 4.7: **Extent of agreement or disagreement among teacher respondents that relationships among staff in their school are happy and friendly and that staff are responsible, cooperative and have initiative**

	WESTERN (N=503)*						COASTAL (N=405)					
	NA**	SD	D	N	A	SA	NA	SD	D	N	A	SA
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Relationships among the staff are happy and friendly	2	2	9	13	50	23	1	1	5	9	63	22
Staff are responsible, cooperative and have initiative	2	1	5	15	54	22	-	1	3	10	63	22

* The number of respondents to individual items in Tables 4.7 to 4.13 varied from 483 to 503 for western teachers and from 395 to 405 for coastal teachers.

** NA = not applicable, SD = strongly disagree, D = disagree, N = neither agree nor disagree, A = agree, SA = strongly agree.

Some differences were apparent in the perceived characteristics of the students for which schools in the study areas cater. Teachers in both western rural and isolated and coastal areas described pupils as friendly; however, approximately 40 per cent of teachers in both cases found discipline to be a problem. Among western respondents, those teachers who had been in the district for six years or less and those in larger primary schools were more likely to encounter disciplinary problems (see Table A.4.6, Appendix 3). A surprisingly high proportion (approximately two-thirds) of teachers in both study groups reported that many of their students came from difficult home environments. Nearly half of the western rural and isolated teachers reported their classes contained a high proportion of children from low socioeconomic backgrounds, compared with 37 per cent for teachers in other areas of the state. Western secondary teachers, more frequently than their primary colleagues, described their students as lacking motivation, including a high proportion of low achievers and coming from difficult home backgrounds (see Tables A.4.7(a), (b) and (c) in Appendix 3).

The largest differences between the perceptions of teachers in the two areas referred to students' educational performance. Thirty-seven per cent of teachers in western schools described their students as easy to teach, 61 per cent reported that their students lacked motivation and 65 per cent considered there was a high proportion of low achievers among their pupils. The corresponding proportions for coastal teachers were 52 per cent, 44 per cent and 45 per cent (Table 4.8).

Table 4.8: Teacher respondents' views of student characteristics

	WESTERN (N=503)*						COASTAL (N=405)					
	NA*	SD	D	N	A	SA	NA	SD	D	N	A	SA
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Students are easy to teach	-	10	27	26	32	5	-	5	22	22	45	7
Students are friendly	-	1	5	13	62	19	-	1	5	12	65	17
Discipline is a problem	-	10	35	17	27	11	1	8	38	16	28	10
Many children come from difficult home backgrounds	1	4	18	16	46	16	1	2	17	16	51	14
Children seem to lack motivation	-	6	15	17	29	32	1	8	26	21	31	13
There seems to be a high proportion of low achievers	1	3	19	13	42	23	1	5	32	18	35	10
There is a high proportion of children from low socio-economic backgrounds	1	5	24	23	32	16	1	6	34	23	27	10

* See footnotes to Table 4.7.

The third cluster of items in this section pertain to aspects of classroom teaching. Some 30 per cent of teachers in both study groups found program planning to be a problem. Western primary teachers were less likely than secondary teachers to find this the case (Tables A.4.8(b) and (c), Appendix 3). Western teachers were more likely than their coastal colleagues, however, to describe their planning as made difficult by a lack of knowledge of the local situation and by the lack of access to a subject master or experienced teachers. More than one-third of western rural and isolated teachers considered that these aspects were problematic compared to less than one-fifth of teachers in coastal and near coastal parts of Queensland. Not surprisingly, lack of local knowledge was of particular concern to those western teachers who had been living in the district for six years or less while lack of access to a subject master or experienced teachers was felt more keenly by secondary than primary teachers (Tables A.4.8(a) and (c), Appendix 3).

Half of the western rural and isolated teachers agreed that there was a lack of resources for teaching and that teaching resources were difficult to obtain. Western teachers were more likely to be confronted with these difficulties than their coastal counterparts. Some differences among western respondents were apparent. For example, administrators, teachers with most experience in the district and primary teachers were less likely to describe a lack of resources for teaching as a significant difficulty (Table A.4.9(a), Appendix 3). Interestingly, teachers who had been at their present school for one year or less were also less likely to find resources a problem, perhaps because these teachers bring into the school resource materials of their own which satisfy their initial needs. Similar differences were found in respect of

teachers' views on the ease with which teaching resource materials could be accessed. That is, administrators and primary teachers were less likely to identify this as a major problem. Greatest difficulty seems to be experienced by teachers in one-teacher and moderately-sized (8-15 teachers) primary schools. Those in small (2-7 teachers) and large (greater than 15 teachers) primary schools were less likely to report difficulties (Table A.4.9(b), Appendix 3).

Approximately 30 per cent of respondents in each of the two study groups reported that teaching multigrades was a problem, although coastal teachers were more likely to indicate that this question was not applicable to their situation.

On the other hand, teachers in both groups generally indicated that smaller classes enabled better teaching. Teachers in larger western primary schools were particularly likely to perceive benefits in teaching small classes (Table A.4.10, Appendix 3). Respondents generally described their work as challenging and demanding, particularly administrators in western schools who expressed considerable job satisfaction as did teachers in one-teacher rural primary schools (Table A.4.11, Appendix 3). A majority of both western and coastal teachers reported that they had much professional freedom and scope for innovation (Table 4.9).

Table 4.9: Teacher respondents' views on aspects of classroom teaching

	WESTERN (N=503)*						COASTAL (N=405)					
	NA* %	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %	NA %	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %
CCP/program planning is a problem	3	3	39	25	24	6	6	5	40	21	23	6
Lack of knowledge of local situation and area makes program planning difficult	3	3	35	25	31	3	7	6	47	22	17	1
Lack of subject master or experienced staff makes program planning difficult	14	4	25	21	25	12	21	9	34	17	15	4
Small classes enable better teaching	3	2	6	9	34	46	3	1	2	8	29	58
Job is challenging and demanding	-	1	2	8	50	39	-	1	3	10	43	44
There is much professional freedom and scope for innovation	1	5	9	23	53	10	1	9	18	18	47	8
Teaching multigrades is a problem	26	1	17	22	27	6	35	4	15	16	25	6
There is a lack of resources for teaching	1	6	31	12	31	19	1	11	40	14	25	9
Teaching resource materials are difficult to obtain	-	3	28	14	35	19	1	10	42	16	26	7

* See footnotes to Table 4.7.

The results relating to teachers' views on the extent of professional support available to them are shown in Table 4.10. Not surprisingly, teachers in western schools felt far more professionally isolated than did their coastal colleagues.

Table 4.10: Teacher respondents' views on the professional support available to them

	WESTERN (N=503)*						COASTAL (N=405)					
	NA* %	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %	NA %	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %
Having no-one else nearby teaching the same subject or year level is a problem	21	2	12	16	27	22	39	6	17	12	16	9
There are very few experienced teachers from whom to ask advice	7	6	26	14	29	19	20	22	36	10	10	2
Teaching subjects not trained for is a problem	27	2	12	18	25	15	36	4	18	12	24	7
Inspectors do not visit frequently enough	6	8	27	34	21	5	14	14	29	30	11	3
There are very few professional associations in the area	1	2	15	21	42	19	8	8	40	21	20	3
There are limited opportunities to participate in professional development seminars	1	6	30	11	35	17	2	14	34	13	29	8
There is a lack of specialist advisory teachers	1	3	22	14	38	22	4	8	31	14	33	10
It is difficult to keep in touch with educational developments elsewhere	-	3	20	14	42	22	3	8	33	16	31	8

* See footnotes to Table 4.7.

Over 60 per cent of western respondents indicated that there were few professional associations in their area, that there was a lack of specialist advisory teachers and that they found it difficult to keep in touch with educational developments elsewhere. The first two issues were of greatest concern to secondary teachers. Teachers in small primary schools also felt more strongly about the lack of access to specialist advisory teachers than did those in larger primary schools. Further, concern about the lack of local professional associations increased as the time teachers had been at the school lengthened (Tables A.4.12(e) and (f), Appendix 3). The corresponding percentages for coastal teachers were significantly lower, with 43 per cent of these teachers reporting a lack of specialist advisory teachers, 39 per

cent reporting that it was difficult to keep in touch with educational developments elsewhere and 23 per cent reporting a lack of local professional associations.

Few experienced teachers from whom to seek advice, the lack of others nearby teaching the same subject or year level (particularly in the secondary sector) and limited opportunities to participate in professional development seminars were also reported by approximately 50 per cent of western teachers. Isolation from experienced teachers was felt most strongly by male teachers, by secondary teachers and by teachers in government schools, and this isolation was perceived to increase with experience. Greater contact with inspectors was also more frequently sought by male teachers, by administrators and by teachers in moderately-sized secondary schools. In contrast, lack of access to experienced staff was not a problem for almost 80 per cent of coastal respondents and only 37 per cent of these teachers reported they lacked opportunities to participate in professional development seminars. Western teachers were more likely to be teaching subjects for which they had not been prepared, especially if they were secondary teachers (Tables A.4.12(a), (b), (c) and (d), Appendix 3).

Teachers' perceptions of career opportunities within their area varied markedly as Table 4.11 shows. For example, appointments in remote areas were viewed as easy to obtain, particularly by male teachers; those in coastal regions, however, were not. Similarly, western teachers had a more positive view of promotional opportunities in their region than did their coastal colleagues. This perception was stronger among western primary teachers than their secondary colleagues and among those who had been at the school longest (Tables A.4.13(a) and (b), Appendix 3).

Table 4.11: Teacher respondents' views on career opportunities in their areas*

	WESTERN (N=503)**						COASTAL (N=405)					
	NA**	SD	D	N	A	SA	NA	SD	D	N	A	SA
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Appointments in remote (coastal) areas are easy to obtain	4	1	4	17	46	27	15	15	26	35	8	1
There are many promotional opportunities in rural (coastal) areas	6	4	18	38	30	6	17	9	21	42	9	2

* Versions of statements in parentheses were those put to coastal respondents.

** See footnotes to Table 4.7.

Teachers' perceptions of community life and of interaction with the community are reported in Table 4.12.

Only a small proportion of teachers living in western rural and isolated areas disagreed with the proposition that living in a rural community was enjoyable. Western teachers' appreciation of rural life and of life in a small community increased with their length of residence in the district and their time at the school. Administrators were more favourably disposed towards a rural lifestyle than were

Table 4.12: Teacher respondents' views on aspects of life in their community

	WESTERN (N=503)**						COASTAL (N=405)					
	NA** %	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %	NA %	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %
Rural life (life in this district) is enjoyable	3	3	5	19	49	22	3	1	3	13	66	15
Interaction in a small community (with the local community) is enjoyable	3	3	7	19	50	18	7	1	4	27	53	8
It is difficult to establish new friendships or relationships	1	18	47	15	15	5	6	12	49	19	13	1
The local people are friendly	-	3	7	20	57	13	5	1	3	16	7	5
Local people have a high regard for teachers	-	9	24	37	26	4	4	2	19	44	33	1
Local people go out of their way to make teachers part of the community	-	13	30	37	17	3	9	5	31	40	15	1
Teachers are genuinely accepted as members of the community	-	9	23	19	43	7	3	2	12	14	66	5
Teachers are regarded as outsiders	1	5	25	27	32	1	9	6	34	34	16	1
Teachers are expected to join in community activities	-	1	5	18	63	14	9	1	10	30	46	4
Teachers tend to mix socially with other itinerants	1	3	13	11	55	17	15	2	20	23	36	4
Isolation from family and friends is a problem	2	1	12	9	43	33	22	6	24	13	26	8
Teachers find it hard to accept being in the public eye	1	5	29	18	38	9	6	6	40	26	20	3
There is a lack of social life	1	21	38	12	18	11	6	15	47	19	11	3
There is a lack of sporting, cultural and leisure activities	-	23	36	6	23	12	5	23	55	7	8	3

* Versions of statements in parentheses were those put to coastal respondents.

** See footnotes to Table 4.7.

teachers (Table A.4.14(a), Appendix 3). A similar small proportion of teachers in coastal areas considered that life in their community was not enjoyable.

Only small percentages of teachers in western rural and isolated schools and in coastal schools had experienced difficulty in establishing new relationships or friendships. Teachers teaching in both study areas had generally found the local people friendly. Western teachers with longest residence in the community were more likely to perceive the locals as friendly than were those comparatively new to the district (Table A.4.14(c), Appendix 3). Neither western nor coastal teachers indicated, however, that members of the local community went out of their way to make teachers part of the community. About one-third of teachers in both groups agreed that local people have a high regard for teachers, with around two-fifths of each group undecided as to whether teachers were held in high regard. Western secondary teachers, in particular, found local residents neither thought highly of teachers nor went out of their way to make teachers part of the community. Community indifference in relation to helping teachers settle into the area was especially apparent in large secondary schools. Teachers in Catholic schools, on the other hand, were more likely than their government counterparts to perceive themselves as highly regarded by the community (Tables A.4.14(d) and (e), Appendix 3).

Several differences between life in remote communities and those in the rest of the state were apparent. Western teachers were less likely to be content with the quality of social life and the opportunity for sporting, cultural and leisure activities, although these were minority opinions in each case. Not surprisingly, these feelings were stronger among those new to the district and those new to the school. Teachers in Catholic schools and those in larger primary schools (no doubt situated in larger centres) were less likely to complain of a lack of sporting, cultural and leisure activities in the district (Table A.4.14(i) and (j)).

A greater proportion of western teachers reported that teachers find it hard to accept being in the public eye and that there is an expectation that teachers participate in local community activities. Almost 50 per cent of western teachers (compared to 23 per cent of those in coastal communities) reported that teachers find it hard to accept being in the public eye. Interestingly, this was of least concern to teachers in small primary schools (Table A.4.14(h), Appendix 3). Seventy-seven per cent of teachers in rural and isolated schools reported that teachers were expected to join in community activities, compared with 50 per cent of teachers in schools in other parts of Queensland.

A more widespread problem for western teachers (unlike their non-rural colleagues) was isolation from family and friends. For a sizeable minority this isolation was not offset by acceptance into the local community. Over 40 per cent, for example, reported that teachers are regarded as outsiders and over 70 per cent that teachers tend to mix socially with other itinerants. Feelings of not being accepted as part of the community and of being regarded as outsiders were stronger among secondary teachers (Tables A.4.14(f) and (g), Appendix 3).

Differences between western teachers' perceptions of the attitudes of parents and coastal teachers' perceptions were also apparent (Table 4.13).

Both groups of teachers viewed the relationship between the school and the community positively, with 70 per cent of western teachers reporting that there was a good relationship between school and community and only 15 per cent reporting that a good relationship did not exist. Among western respondents, this view was most widespread among teachers who had been at the school longest and those teaching in Catholic schools. Those in one-teacher primary schools agreed most strongly that this was the case (Table A.4.15(a), Appendix 3). Western teachers, however, were more likely than coastal teachers to report that they were familiar with their students'

parents and yet to describe parental interest in their children's education as low. Over 50 per cent of western teachers agreed with each of these statements. Within this group of teachers, knowledge of class parents was greater among primary teachers, teachers who had lived in the district for more than six years and increased with teachers' length of appointment to the school. Not surprisingly, teachers in smaller schools, both secondary and primary, described themselves as more familiar with their students' parents than did those in larger schools. Secondary teachers were more likely to perceive parental disinterest in their children's education than were primary teachers (Tables A.4.15(b) and (c), Appendix 3).

Western teachers were more likely than coastal teachers to perceive itinerants as placing greater value on education than local residents and to agree that lack of personal privacy intruded into their professional work. Primary teachers and those with more than four years' experience at the school, however, were less likely to regard itinerants as valuing education more highly than local residents. Perceived lack of personal privacy was more widespread among secondary teachers than primary teachers (Tables A.4.15(d) and (e), Appendix 3).

Table 4.13: Teacher respondents' views on parental attitudes

	WESTERN (N=503)*						COASTAL (N=405)					
	NA*	SD	D	N	A	SA	NA	SD	D	N	A	SA
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
In general, the relationship between school and community is good	-	4	11	16	62	8	-	2	11	17	65	6
Parents' interest in the children's education is low	-	4	22	20	37	16	-	8	37	20	29	6
Teachers get to know (class) parents well	-	5	16	20	46	14	-	6	34	18	37	5
Itinerants place more value on education than do local residents	4	12	21	22	23	17	11	16	33	29	10	2
Lack of personal privacy intrudes into professional work	4	4	24	18	28	22	9	10	39	21	16	6

* See footnotes for Table 4.7.

4.3 Teachers' future plans

Table 4.14 shows that 65 per cent of teachers in rural or isolated settings sought to leave their school within the next twelve months, and only 19 per cent wanted to stay three years or more. Non-rural teachers appeared, by comparison, to be more settled in their current situation with almost half indicating no intention of leaving their present school for at least three years (and of these the majority planned to stay longer than three years).

Table 4.14: Length of time teachers plan to remain at their present school

LENGTH OF TIME	WESTERN (N=499) %	COASTAL (N=391) %
Want to leave immediately	4	3
End of this year	32	19
Next year	29	15
2 years	15	15
3 years	7	10
More than 3 years	12	37

Some differences among western teachers were apparent. For example, female and married teachers intended staying longer at their present school than did male or single teachers. Most of those who had lived in the district for more than six years planned to stay for at least another few years. Similarly, one-third of teachers who had been teaching at their present school for at least four years intended remaining there for at least another three years. A significant difference existed between the responses of teachers in government and Catholic schools. The latter, more frequently, intended staying in their present school for at least three years, perhaps indicative of the different employment policies in the two sectors (Table A.4.16(a), Appendix 3).

The most common reasons western and isolated teachers gave for planning to leave their present school within two years referred to a desire to improve aspects of their personal life. Respondents cited isolation from family and friends, the lack of social, recreational, cultural activities in the district, the desire to live near the coast or in a larger population centre with better commercial and financial facilities, and changes to their living arrangements such as marriage, separation, plans to start a family.

A cluster of reasons also focused on teachers' interest in professional development and career advancement, although these were less frequently reported. Comments referred to the need for a new challenge or for a change, a feeling of having been at the school long enough, the greater opportunity for professional development (including further studies) in larger centres, the gaining of promotion or transfer and a desire to experience a different learning environment. Promotion or transfer was given as a more common reason for wanting to leave the school by male teachers, administrators and those in one-teacher schools. Single teachers were more likely than their married colleagues to wish to leave the school because of a desire for change or an interest in different experiences.

Very few western teachers listed limitations, problems or dissatisfaction with their present teaching situation as reasons for wishing to leave. Reasons such as professional isolation, the attitudes of children, discipline problems, and dissatisfaction with the quality of administration were mentioned, but infrequently. Similarly, only a handful of comments outlined problems associated with living in a small, rural community: for example, community size and resulting narrow-mindedness and lack of privacy, or community attitude towards teachers or education.

The responses of coastal teachers were similar to those of their western counterparts. Teachers most usually intended to leave for personal reasons, for example, isolation from family and friends, distance of school from residential address, retirement, resignation, long service leave or their spouse's job requirements.

Reasons referring to professional development and career advancement were also reasonably common: for example, the need for a new challenge or for a change, a feeling of having been at the school long enough, gaining of promotion or transfer, desire to experience a different learning environment, greater opportunity for professional development including further studies in larger centres.

Again, coastal teachers gave little emphasis to dissatisfaction with the teachers' present teaching situation, with few comments falling into this category. For example, high workload at school, lack of recognition or appreciation at school, attitude of children and discipline problems were mentioned by coastal teachers, but very infrequently.

Teachers were also asked to indicate whether they would be interested in teaching in an isolated school at their next or subsequent appointments. Twenty-seven per cent of western teachers indicated that they would be interested in such an appointment, but nearly half said that they would not be interested. On the other hand, only 8 per cent of teachers in coastal schools indicated that they were interested in an appointment to an isolated school.

Of the western teachers who expressed an interest in a subsequent appointment to a rural school, 73 per cent would prefer a school of the same size or smaller than that at which they were currently teaching. These results are tabulated below (Tables 4.15 and 4.16).

Table 4.15: Teachers' interest in future appointment to an isolated school

PREFERENCE	WESTERN (N=496) %	COASTAL (N=398) %
Yes	27	8
No	47	83
Undecided	26	9

Table 4.16: Size of isolated school in which western teachers preferred to work in the future

PREFERENCE	WESTERN (N=157) %
The same size	54
Smaller	19
Larger	26
Much larger	1

The responses of some groups, however, were exceptional. A majority of western administrators (54 per cent) preferred a subsequent appointment in a larger or much larger school. Teachers in one-teacher primary schools also generally reported a preference for a larger school (Table A.4.16(b), Appendix 3).

Teachers who did not wish to teach in another isolated school indicated their preferences for subsequent appointments. Western teachers were more likely to seek an appointment in a coastal city, a large coastal town or a small coastal town than were their coastal colleagues who were more likely to indicate a preference for Brisbane. The complete results are presented below in Table 4.17.

Table 4.17: Preferences* of teachers not wanting a future appointment to an isolated school

PREFERENCE	WESTERN (N=238) %	COASTAL (N=321) %
Leave teaching	12	13
Teach overseas or interstate	12	13
Brisbane	21	35
Coastal city	32	20
Inland city	8	4
Large coastal town	26	21
Inland town	11	7
Small coastal town	26	12
Small inland town	6	4

* Note: Some teachers indicated more than one preference.

4.4 Parental attitudes

Parents in both rural and isolated and coastal communities were generally satisfied with their town or district as a place in which to live. In both cases over 90 per cent of respondents were satisfied with life in the community. The full results are presented below in Table 4.18. In respect of western respondents, satisfaction was strongest among those who had lived in the district for more than six years and among those who lived in larger towns (Table A.4.17, Appendix 3).

Table 4.18: Parents' rating of satisfaction with life in local community

DEGREE OF SATISFACTION	WESTERN (N=211) %	COASTAL (N=179) %
Very satisfied	31	37
Satisfied	60	56
Dissatisfied	7	6
Very dissatisfied	1	2

Similar levels of knowledge and understanding of local schools were also claimed by both groups of parents. Some two-thirds in each case rated their knowledge as good or very good, with approximately one-third considering that their knowledge was merely fair (Table 4.19).

Table 4.19: Parents' views of their knowledge and understanding of local schools

	WESTERN (N=214) %	COASTAL (N=179) %
Very good	22	26
Good	40	40
Fair	34	32
Poor	4	1
Very poor	1	1

Some differences were apparent regarding parents' perceptions of the quality of teachers in the schools with which they were familiar. Parents in western communities tended to view secondary teachers less positively than their primary counterparts. For example, while 14 per cent of parents classed local primary teachers as excellent, only 5 per cent described secondary teachers in this way. Secondary teachers were more likely to be rated as merely "satisfactory" than were primary teachers.

Parents in coastal communities viewed the quality of primary and secondary teachers in schools with which they were familiar as similar. Over 50 per cent rated teachers in both sectors as good or excellent. Two-thirds of these parents described secondary teachers as good or excellent compared with only about one-third of rural parents who described secondary teachers this way. Thus, it appears that while western and coastal parents have similar views regarding the quality of primary teaching, coastal parents have a higher regard for secondary teachers than do western parents. The results are presented in Table 4.20.

Table 4.20: Parents' perception of quality of teachers in local schools

	WESTERN		COASTAL	
	PRIMARY (N=207)	SECONDARY (N=148)	PRIMARY (N=160)	SECONDARY (N=130)
	%	%	%	%
Excellent	14	5	14	17
Good	37	30	41	49
Satisfactory	44	51	36	32
Poor	2	7	4	6
Very poor	1	3	1	-
No opinion	2	5	4	6

Table 4.21 shows that most parents believe teachers should stay in one school for a minimum of three years. Parents in western communities, however, were less likely to expect teachers to remain for an extended period. Only 10 per cent of these parents considered teachers should remain in the one school for more than five years, compared with 29 per cent of coastal parents who held this view.

In both western and coastal communities a longer stay for principals seemed to be preferred. Over 40 per cent of those in western centres thought principals should stay in the one school for a minimum of five years. Western respondents from small communities, however, tended to be more sympathetic to principals staying less than that time (Table A.4.18, Appendix 3).

Table 4.21: Parents' perception of desirable length of stay in one school of principals and teachers

	WESTERN		COASTAL	
	PRINCIPALS (N=205)	TEACHERS (N=201)	PRINCIPALS (N=170)	TEACHERS (N=167)
LENGTH (YEARS)	%	%	%	%
1	1	2	1	-
2	9	23	8	16
3	31	38	25	29
4	18	12	12	10
5	26	13	25	17
More than 5	15	10	29	29

Both groups of parents considered educational factors (stability of school tone and teaching methods, familiarity with the children) to be the most important reasons why principals and teachers should stay at one school for a number of years. Becoming familiar with the community was seen as important, but not as important as the other two factors (see Table 4.22).

Table 4.22: Parents' perceptions of importance of reasons why principals and teachers should stay at a school

	WESTERN (N=210)				COASTAL (N=175)			
	NOT IMP. %	SL. IMP. %	MOD. IMP. %	VERY IMP. %	NOT IMP. %	SL. IMP. %	MOD. IMP. %	VERY IMP. %
To allow for stability of school tone or atmosphere	1	2	28	68	2	6	29	62
To allow for stability and continuity in teaching methods	1	4	23	73	-	6	22	72
To get to know the children well	4	15	36	45	2	7	34	57
To get to know the community well	7	21	40	32	6	20	42	32

Western parents also rated the importance of a number of reasons for principals and teachers leaving the town or district after only a short stay. The reason most frequently seen as influential was promotion; 80 per cent of respondents described it as important or very important.

A second cluster of reasons, each of which approximately two-thirds of respondents listed as important or very important, focused predominantly on problems associated with rural life including isolation from family and friends, inability to adjust to living in the country, difficulty fitting in with the social life of a rural community, poor accommodation and lack of school support. Those who had lived in the district for six years or less, however, tended to view isolation from family and friends as a more persuasive factor in teachers' decisions to leave than did longer term residents (Table A.4.19, Appendix 3).

The remaining reasons, as Table 4.23 shows, although less frequently seen as influential, were still rated as moderately important or very important by over 50 per cent of respondents.

Table 4.23: Western parents' perceptions of the importance of each reason for principals and teachers leaving the town/district

	(N=194-204)*			
	NOT IMPORTANT	SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT	MOD. IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT
	%	%	%	%
Isolation from family and friends	15	20	35	31
Lack of facilities for leisure pursuits	20	30	32	19
Inability to adjust to living in the country	13	20	36	31
Difficulty in fitting in with social life of rural community	15	24	40	22
Promotion	7	13	33	47
Climate	30	30	27	13
Poor accommodation	20	16	37	28
High cost of living	19	25	31	25
Attitude of pupils	29	20	28	25
Lack of Departmental/Catholic Education Office support	24	22	23	31
Lack of school support	15	21	24	40

* Note: Number of respondents varied from 194 to 204 depending on the item.

Western parents also indicated the extent of their agreement with a number of statements on rural appointments. By and large, parents believed student teachers should be aware that they may be required to teach anywhere in the state. There was also widespread agreement, however, that care should be taken in selecting teachers for rural and isolated schools and that rural communities should bear some of the responsibility for helping teachers adapt to living and working in rural and isolated communities. Community members with the shorter period of residence in the district felt most strongly that there is room for improvement in current procedures for selecting teachers for rural appointments (Table A.4.20, Appendix 3). Some 60 per cent of parents were of the opinion that teacher education institutions should recommend selected students for rural appointments.

Slightly more than half the respondents believed principals and teachers moved too quickly from schools in their towns, although almost 60 per cent of respondents thought that movement of teachers between schools introduces variety and new ideas. These results are presented in Table 4.24 below.

Table 4.24: Percentage of rural parents' agreeing or disagreeing with statements on rural appointments

	(N=210)					
	NA* %	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %
Principals and teachers move too quickly from schools in towns such as yours	5	2	20	18	36	18
The community should accept some responsibility for helping teachers to adapt to living and working in rural and isolated communities	1	1	6	14	60	17
Movement of teachers between schools introduces variety and new ideas	4	4	19	15	50	9
Student teachers should be informed of their responsibility to teach anywhere in the state	2	-	6	7	47	38
The procedures for selecting teachers for rural and isolated schools should be improved	7	1	4	13	39	37
Teacher education institutions should recommend selected students for rural appointments	4	4	15	15	39	22

* NA = not applicable, SD = strongly disagree, D = disagree, N = neither agree nor disagree, A = agree, SA = strongly agree.

The community was asked what they thought would encourage principals and teachers to stay longer in rural schools. Ninety per cent agreed that improving school facilities and equipment was of importance although information on rural areas, better accommodation and improved promotional opportunities were all rated as moderately or very important by more than 80 per cent of parents.

Table 4.25: Western community respondents' views on how to encourage principals and teachers to stay longer in rural schools

	(N=203-207)			
	NOT IMPORTANT	SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT	MOD. IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT
	%	%	%	%
Improvement in school facilities and equipment	1	9	35	55
Provision of information on what it is like to teach in rural and isolated areas	2	11	27	60
Provision of better quality accommodation (including air conditioning)	5	13	32	51
Improved promotional opportunities after service in rural schools	5	8	38	49
Provision of financial incentives	10	13	36	41

4.5 Summary

Teachers in western Queensland are relatively inexperienced, and for 30 per cent of these teachers, their current school was their first appointment. Western Queensland teachers had generally placed their present school lower down on their list of preferences than teachers in coastal schools had placed their present school on the preference list. Two-thirds of western teachers reported nonetheless that they were satisfied or very satisfied when they heard of their appointment and only 18 per cent of western teachers had become more dissatisfied since taking up their appointment. Reasons for increased satisfaction of teachers teaching in western Queensland schools related mainly to factors associated with the school, such as good staff relationships and friendly pupils, and to a lesser extent, satisfaction in working with the community.

There were some differences apparent between western and coastal teachers in their perceptions of aspects of their current appointment. Both groups of teachers considered their pupils were friendly, but a higher proportion of teachers in western Queensland schools perceived their pupils to lack motivation and to be low achievers. This was more so in secondary than in primary schools. Planning for western teachers was made more difficult by lack of knowledge of the local situation and by a lack of resources. Western teachers also had less access to support facilities such as specialist advisory teachers, local professional associations, and experienced teachers teaching the same subjects or year levels. Both western and coastal teachers found interaction with the community enjoyable and community members to be friendly, but western teachers were less content with their social life, found it harder to accept being in the public eye, and were more concerned about isolation from family and friends. Western teachers were more familiar with the parents of the children whom they taught, but considered the interest of parents in their children's education to be lower than did teachers in coastal and near coastal schools.

Two-thirds of the western teachers wanted to leave their present school by the end of the following year. The most common reasons given for wanting to leave were related to personal issues such as absence from family and friends, lack of social activities and desire to live in a larger population centre. Very few teachers

mentioned reasons associated with dissatisfaction with their teaching situation or school as a reason for wanting to leave. About one-quarter of the western teachers said they would be interested in a rural and isolated school at a subsequent appointment.

Both western and coastal parents appeared to be satisfied with life in their local community. Parents seemed to to be reasonably satisfied with the teachers teaching in western and coastal schools, although western parents were less satisfied with secondary teachers than were coastal parents. Western parents were more satisfied with primary than with secondary teachers. Parents in western communities considered that teachers should stay in the one school for a minimum of three years and principals for a minimum of four years. They believed that teachers left mainly for promotional or personal reasons.

Parents in western Queensland believed that student teachers should be made aware of their responsibility to teach anywhere in Queensland and that there should be careful selection of teachers for teaching in western areas. They also agreed that the community should accept some responsibility for helping teachers to adjust to working and living in rural communities.

CHAPTER 5

DESIRABLE TEACHER QUALITIES

All groups of respondents were asked to rate the importance of a number of qualities and abilities of teachers for living and teaching in towns or districts such as the one in which they lived. In all, respondents were requested to rate the importance of twenty-five items. For the purposes of the following discussion, these items have been grouped according to the following headings: teaching skills, personal qualities and interests, and the teacher's relationship with the community.

Results of crosstabulations for this section are given in Tables A.5.1 to A.5.4 in Appendix 3.

5.1 Teaching skills

Certain teaching skills were perceived as necessary irrespective of the teacher's location. A very high proportion of all groups of respondents agreed that teachers need to be able to relate to and communicate with children, be able to teach and have the ability to maintain discipline. The strength of these opinions is clear from the figures provided in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Proportion of respondents rating each teacher quality (teaching skills) as very important or essential

	RESPONDENT GROUP			
	WESTERN TEACHERS (N=493)*	COASTAL TEACHERS (N=404)	WESTERN PARENTS (N=211)	COASTAL PARENTS (N=174)
	%	%	%	%
Ability to foster a good relationship with children	89	94	89	87
Ability to communicate with children	94	98	99	97
Teaching ability	90	94	98	97
Ability to maintain discipline	91	92	95	89
Knowledge of subjects taught	74	73	90	91
Ability to teach multigrade classes	50	29	51	49
Willingness to work with low-ability children	70	53	74	78
Willingness to take on new roles within the school	75	51	44	45

* Note: The number of respondents for individual items in Tables 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 ranged as follows: for western teachers: 482-493, coastal teachers: 396-404, for western parents: 207-211, for coastal parents: 170-174.

Teachers' perceptions of the need for others of the teaching skills listed appeared to be influenced by physical location. A clear majority of those in western settings considered a willingness to take on new roles within the school and to work with low-ability children were very important or essential characteristics of teachers, while half of the teachers in rural and isolated areas reported that the ability to teach multigrade classes was very important or essential. A much smaller proportion of the teachers in coastal areas considered these three items to be important.

Parents' perceptions, on the other hand, were not dependent upon where they lived; a willingness to work with low-ability children was stressed by approximately three-quarters of respondents in both western and coastal areas and an ability to teach multigrade classes and willingness to take on new roles within the school by some 50 per cent in each case. Not surprisingly, an ability to work with multigrade classes was supported most strongly by parents in small communities (Table A.5.1, Appendix 3).

It is also useful to comment on differences between expectations of western parents and those of western teachers. Western parents considered the knowledge of subjects taught to be more important than did western teachers; on the other hand, teachers considered the ability to take on new roles within the school to be more important for teaching in rural and isolated areas than did parents.

5.2 Personal qualities and interests

Qualities such as dedication to teaching, patience, understanding, an ability to set a good example and common sense were perceived by all groups of respondents as very important or absolutely essential for teachers. Agreement on the importance of other personal attributes - maturity, intelligence, and broadmindedness - was less widespread.

Still, a clear majority of western teachers considered that maturity and broadmindedness and tolerance were important for teaching and living in rural areas. Approximately half of this group of teachers reported that the following attributes were important: experience, intelligence, neat appearance, outgoing personality, interests in sporting activities. High academic qualifications were not seen as important by teachers in rural and isolated schools.

A smaller proportion of teachers in coastal schools reported that an interest in sporting activities and an outgoing personality were important, and maturity and experience were seen as less important by teachers in coastal schools.

A majority of rural parents considered that maturity, experience, intelligence, a neat appearance and broadmindedness and tolerance were desirable characteristics of teachers teaching in rural schools. There was a high degree of commonality between rural parents and coastal parents concerning the extent to which they considered each of the personal attributes important to living and teaching in the particular area.

Some small differences between the perceptions of parents and those of teachers in western schools were evident. Parents were more likely to emphasise a neat appearance, high academic qualifications and intelligence than were teachers, although it should be noted that only approximately one-third of parents described high academic qualifications as very important or absolutely essential.

Parents' and teachers' responses are summarised below in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Proportion of respondents rating each teacher quality (personal qualities and interests) as very important or essential

	RESPONDENT GROUP			
	WESTERN TEACHERS (N=493)*	COASTAL TEACHERS (N=404)	WESTERN PARENTS (N=211)	COASTAL PARENTS (N=174)
	%	%	%	%
Dedication to teaching	85	80	85	85
Patience	86	88	81	81
Understanding	90	89	87	85
Maturity	79	68	67	63
Experience	47	38	54	53
Ability to set a good example for children	80	80	84	82
Common sense	89	87	81	89
Intelligence	53	54	66	66
Broadmindedness and tolerance	74	63	56	61
High academic qualifications	11	11	32	37
Neat appearance	45	48	56	55
Outgoing personality	46	34	35	33
Interest in sporting activities	40	23	31	24

* See footnote to Table 5.1.

5.3 Relationship with the community

Greatest differences between the expectations of western teachers and their coastal colleagues were apparent in respect of factors describing teachers' interaction with their local community.

Over 80 per cent of western teachers viewed it as very important or absolutely essential that teachers be able to adapt to a different lifestyle and 56 per cent stressed an ability to "rough it", these responses reflecting, no doubt, adjustments respondents made in their own lives as the result of their rural appointments. These matters were of great importance to only 42 per cent and 25 per cent respectively of coastal teachers.

Teachers' responses also indicate different expectations with regard to community involvement. More than twice as many western teachers as coastal teachers (59 per cent cf. 22 per cent) viewed a readiness to join community organisations as very important or absolutely essential and one-and-a-half times as many (70 per cent cf. 42 per cent) stressed an ability to interact with the community.

Western parents also gave far less weight to these items than did western teachers. Fifty-nine per cent of western parents considered that it was important

that teachers be able to adapt to a different lifestyle, while 44 per cent reported that it was important for teachers to have an ability to interact with the community. Only about one-quarter of western parents considered readiness to join community organisations as a very important or essential teacher characteristic. It is also interesting to note that there were similar levels of importance attached by both western and coastal parents to teachers' willingness to interact with the community and join in community organisations.

Responses are provided in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Proportion of respondents rating each teacher quality (relationship with the community) as very important or essential

	RESPONDENT GROUP			
	WESTERN TEACHERS (N=493)*	COASTAL TEACHERS (N=404)	WESTERN PARENTS (N=211)	COASTAL PARENTS (N=174)
	%	%	%	%
Ability to interact with the community	70	42	44	46
Ability to adapt to a different lifestyle	84	38	59	44
Readiness to join community organisations	59	22	28	23
Ability to "rough it"	56	25	27	19

* See footnote to Table 5.1.

5.4 Desirable teacher qualities of western primary and secondary teachers

An analysis was undertaken so that the perceptions of western primary and secondary teachers concerning desirable teacher qualities could be examined separately.

The results for those items relating to teaching skills are shown in Table 5.4. The table shows that primary teachers considered the ability to teach multigrade classes as much more important than did western secondary teachers. This result is predictable as western primary teachers are more likely to teach multi-grade classes than are secondary teachers. The finding that teachers in small primary schools considered the ability to teach multigrade classes to be more important than did teachers in larger primary schools is also to be expected (Table A.5.2, Appendix 3).

For all of the other teaching skills items, there were only relatively small differences between the perceptions of primary and secondary teachers. It was interesting to note, nonetheless, that western primary teachers placed a little more emphasis on the ability to work with low-ability students than did secondary teachers. Moreover, teachers in one-teacher primary schools gave lower importance to willingness to work with low-ability pupils and the ability to maintain discipline (Tables A.5.3 and A.5.4, Appendix 3.)

Table 5.4: **Proportion of western primary and secondary teachers rating each teacher quality (teaching skills) as very important or essential**

	PRIMARY (N=192-197) %	SECONDARY (N=186-215) %
Ability to foster a good relationship with children	82	85
Ability to communicate with children	95	92
Teaching ability	91	88
Ability to maintain discipline	91	92
Knowledge of subjects taught	71	77
Ability to teach multigrade classes	68	36
Willingness to work with low-ability students	74	65
Willingness to take on new roles within the school	73	74

Table 5.5 shows the results for personal qualities and interests. Western primary and secondary teachers' opinions for these items were similar. Secondary teachers did, however, attach a little more importance to intelligence as a desirable teacher quality, and primary teachers attached more importance to broadmindedness and tolerance.

Table 5.5: **Proportion of western primary and secondary teachers rating each teacher quality (personal qualities) as very important or essential**

	PRIMARY (N=192-197) %	SECONDARY (N=210-215) %
Dedication to teaching	87	81
Patience	89	83
Understanding	92	89
Maturity	80	77
Experience	45	49
Ability to set a good example for children	79	80
Common sense	86	87
Intelligence	49	56
Broadmindedness and tolerance	79	68
High academic qualifications	7	10
Neat appearance	47	44
Outgoing personality	43	47
Interest in sporting activities	37	41

The perceptions of western primary and secondary teachers on those teacher qualities which concern relationships with the community are shown in Table 5.6

There was a tendency for a greater proportion of western primary teachers than secondary teachers to consider that each of these qualities was important. That is, western primary teachers believe that the ability to foster a good relationship with the community and to adapt to a different lifestyle are more important for teaching and living in rural and isolated areas than do western secondary teachers.

Table 5.6: **Proportion of western primary and secondary teachers rating each teacher quality (relationship with the community) as very important or essential**

	PRIMARY (N=192-197)	SECONDARY (N=210-215)
	%	%
Ability to interact with the community	82	73
Ability to adapt to a different lifestyle	85	78
Readiness to join community organisations	61	51
Ability to "rough it"	57	52

5.5 Summary

All groups of respondents (i.e. western teachers, coastal teachers, western parents and coastal parents) considered personal attributes such as dedication to teaching, patience, understanding and the ability to set a good example for children as important teacher qualities. Western teachers were more likely than the other groups to emphasise broadmindedness and tolerance, an outgoing personality and interest in sporting activities as important. Western parents were more likely than western teachers to emphasise a neat appearance and intelligence as desirable teacher attributes.

With respect to teaching skills, all groups endorsed the importance of teaching ability, discipline and the ability to relate and communicate with children as important teacher qualities. Western teachers gave more emphasis than coastal teachers to the ability to take on new roles within the school and the ability to work with low-ability children.

Greatest differences between western teachers and other groups came in respononse to the importance of relationships with the community. Western teachers were much more likely to rate the ability to interact with the community, readiness to join community organisations and the ability to adapt to a different lifestyle as important.

There were few differences between the perceptions of western primary and western secondary teachers and between primary teachers in small and larger schools regarding desirable teacher qualities. One exception to this was the ability to teach multigrade classes which was seen as more important by primary teachers, particularly those in small western schools.

CHAPTER 6

PRE-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION

6.1 Pre-service qualifications

Most teachers had completed three- or four-year pre-service teacher education programs and had undertaken their initial preparation at a Queensland institution. The higher percentage of coastal teachers with a Certificate of Teaching (which was last awarded in the early 1970s) compared with their western colleagues (31 per cent and 17 per cent respectively) is indicative of the fact that respondents from rural and isolated schools tended to be younger and to have completed their pre-service education more recently. (A detailed report on teacher qualifications in western Queensland is to be found in McSwan, 1985.)

In fact, 58 per cent of teachers in western schools had completed their pre-service teacher education in the 1980s, while only 27 per cent of teachers in coastal schools had completed their pre-service preparation during this period.

The institutions at which both study groups of teachers obtained their pre-service qualifications were similar. One-third of each group had obtained their pre-service qualification at the Kelvin Grove College of Advanced Education or the Kelvin Grove Campus of the Brisbane College of Advanced Education. A higher proportion of teachers in rural schools had gained their pre-service qualifications at the University of Queensland, reflecting the higher proportion of secondary teachers in this group. Ten per cent of teachers in rural schools had gained their pre-service qualification at an interstate institution and 2 per cent at an overseas institution.

Full information on respondents' pre-service qualifications is provided in Tables 6.1 to 6.3.

Table 6.1: Qualifications gained by teacher respondents on completion of pre-service teacher education

QUALIFICATIONS	WESTERN (N=498) %	COASTAL (N=401) %
Certificate of Teaching	17	31
Diploma of Teaching	64	52
Degree plus Diploma in Education or Graduate Diploma in Teaching	16	12
Bachelor of Education	2	3
Other	1	1

Table 6.2: Institution at which teacher respondents' pre-service teacher education qualifications were completed

INSTITUTION	WESTERN (N=503) %	COASTAL (N=400) %
University of Queensland	10	6
BCAE: Mount Gravatt	17	12
Kelvin Grove	33	34
North Brisbane (Kedron/Carseldine)	8	14
McAuley College	2	3
Darling Downs IAE	7	5
Capricornia IAE	2	2
James Cook University	1	1
JCUNQIAE/Townsville CAE	4	5
BKIC	1	1
Interstate	10	10
Overseas	2	5
Other (not specified)	4	3

Table 6.3: Year in which teacher respondents' pre-service teacher education qualifications were completed

YEAR	WESTERN (N=502) %	COASTAL (N=400) %
Pre-1960	6	11
1960-1969	8	22
1970-1979	28	41
1980	8	7
1981	11	3
1982	10	6
1983	14	3
1984	14	7
1985	< 1	1

6.2 Preparation for teaching in rural and isolated areas

Less than one-fifth of western teachers reported undertaking subjects, activities or experiences in their pre-service course which had been of direct relevance to teaching in rural and isolated areas.

Of the 19 per cent of western teachers who indicated that their pre-service program had provided them with activities aimed at preparing them for teaching in rural and isolated schools, 82 per cent commented on those aspects which they had found most beneficial. The largest group of comments referred to practice teaching in a rural and isolated school or in a setting which shared characteristics with such schools, for example, a small school or a multigrade situation.

Common, too, were comments on relevant subjects studied in the pre-service program, for example, units on teaching in rural and isolated schools, living in rural and isolated communities, and multicultural or Aboriginal education. Several teachers also mentioned learning about some aspect of teaching and living in rural and isolated areas but did not indicate whether this was through a subject or other component directed specifically at such teaching. A few teachers mentioned the availability of relevant courses, although they themselves had not taken them.

A small number of teachers described aspects or components of courses which were not specifically directed at rural and isolated teaching (for example, classroom psychology, individual differences, remediation in secondary school mathematics) as nonetheless beneficial in preparing them to teach in such areas.

Other beneficial experiences each mentioned by a few teachers were visits to rural and isolated or small schools, time spent in a rural or isolated community, talks by teachers or community members from rural and isolated schools, working with parents, maintaining a resource folder, learning how to use available resources and qualifications in an area other than education.

Rural teachers and parents were also asked to indicate the value of a range of pre-service experiences (listed in a forced-choice question) in preparing teachers for service in rural and isolated schools. Parents' evaluations were similar to teachers' and both sets of responses appear to be influenced by the authenticity of the experience and its perceived application to teaching.

For example, the experience considered to be of greatest value was practice teaching in rural and isolated areas; the experience least frequently described this way (particularly by teachers) was reading selected literature on rural and isolated schools and areas.

Over half of the teachers reported that courses on remediation of low-achieving students would be of great benefit. Work with composite classes, information on rural and isolated areas given by people with appropriate experiences, visits to rural and isolated schools and areas and subjects on teaching in small and isolated communities were also valued by both parents and teachers.

Perceived to be of less value by both parents and teachers were activities involving student interaction with the community, although rural administrators tended to view this as valuable. This difference in perception is perhaps indicative of the different roles played by administrative and non-administrative school staff in rural communities. Teachers were also not very enthusiastic about the value of videotapes of rural and isolated schools and areas.

Teachers' and parents' responses are shown below in Table 6.4.

Table 6.4: Teacher and community respondents' perceptions of the value of various experiences for preparing student teachers for service in rural and isolated areas

	WESTERN TEACHERS (N=490-498)				WESTERN PARENTS (N=205-209)			
	NO VALUE	LITTLE VALUE	SOME VALUE	GREAT VALUE	NO VALUE	LITTLE VALUE	SOME VALUE	GREAT VALUE
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Practice teaching in rural and isolated areas	1	4	30	65	3	4	32	61
Subjects on teaching in small and isolated communities	2	12	46	40	2	11	40	47
Visits to rural and isolated schools and areas	2	12	44	42	2	10	31	57
Selected readings on rural and isolated schools and areas	10	33	46	11	5	16	48	31
Videotapes of rural and isolated schools and areas	3	15	54	29	3	9	46	42
Information on rural and isolated areas given by people with appropriate experiences	-	8	45	47	1	4	35	39
Activities involving student interaction with the community	4	18	50	27	3	13	46	38
Working with composite classes	5	11	38	47	6	10	38	45
Courses on remediation of low-achieving students	2	6	38	54	Not asked			

An analysis was made to determine the value which western primary and secondary teachers placed on various experiences and activities relevant to preparing teachers for service in rural and isolated areas. For the primary teachers, a further breakdown into those teaching in smaller (1-5 teachers) and larger (6 or more teachers) schools was made. The results for primary and secondary teachers are shown in Table 6.5.

This table shows that, in general, primary teachers saw more value in most of the experiences than did secondary teachers. The most notable difference between primary and secondary teachers was for the item "working with composite classes". Sixty-five per cent of western primary teachers considered that this would be of great value in preparing teachers for service in rural and isolated areas, whereas only 28 per cent of secondary teachers considered it so. There was a tendency for a greater proportion of primary teachers than secondary teachers to perceive each of the following to be of a little more value: practice teaching in rural and isolated schools, videos of rural and isolated schools and areas, activities involving student teacher interaction with the community. On the other hand, 51 per cent of western secondary teachers, compared with 40 per cent of western primary teachers, felt that information on rural and isolated areas given by people with appropriate experiences would be of great value.

Table 6.5: **Opinions of western primary and secondary teachers on the value of various activities and experiences in preparing teachers for service in rural and isolated areas**

	PRIMARY TEACHERS (N=197-202)				SECONDARY TEACHERS (N=210-217)			
	NO VALUE %	LITTLE VALUE %	SOME VALUE %	GREAT VALUE %	NO VALUE %	LITTLE VALUE %	SOME VALUE %	GREAT VALUE %
Practice teaching in rural and isolated areas	< 1	1	30	68	1	7	34	58
Subjects on teaching in small and isolated communities	1	8	49	42	3	16	43	38
Visits to rural and isolated schools and areas	1	6	49	44	3	17	41	39
Selected readings on rural and isolated schools and areas	8	32	49	11	14	35	44	7
Videotapes of rural and isolated schools and areas	3	14	57	26	4	18	54	24
Information on rural and isolated areas given by people with appropriate experiences	-	6	54	40	1	11	37	51
Activities involving student interaction with the community	5	15	50	30	5	23	49	24
Working with composite classes	1	3	30	65	9	19	44	28
Courses on remediation of low-achieving students	1	6	41	52	2	6	36	56

Table 6.6: Opinions of western primary teachers in small (1-5 teachers) and larger (6 or more teachers) schools on the value of various activities and experiences in preparing teachers for service in rural and isolated areas

	SMALL PRIMARY SCHOOLS (N=64-65)				MEDIUM-LARGE PRIMARY SCHOOLS (N=132-137)			
	NO VALUE	LITTLE VALUE	SOME VALUE	GREAT VALUE	NO VALUE	LITTLE VALUE	SOME VALUE	GREAT VALUE
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Practice teaching in rural and isolated areas	-	3	20	77	1	1	35	64
Subjects on teaching in small and isolated communities	-	6	43	51	1	9	53	34
Visits to rural and isolated schools and areas	-	5	37	58	2	7	54	37
Selected readings on rural and isolated schools and areas	12	35	38	14	6	30	54	10
Videotapes of rural and isolated schools and areas	3	9	64	23	3	16	54	27
Information on rural and isolated areas given by people with appropriate experiences	-	11	55	34	-	3	54	43
Activities involving student interaction with the community	8	11	42	39	3	17	54	26
Working with composite classes	1	3	25	71	1	3	33	63
Courses on remediation of low-achieving students	2	11	39	48	1	3	42	54

The results for western primary teachers teaching in small and medium to large schools are shown in Table 6.6. These results indicate that primary teachers teaching in the smaller schools saw more value in most of the activities than did teachers teaching in the larger schools. Those items for which there was greatest difference between small and larger schools were: subjects on teaching in small and isolated communities, practice teaching in rural and isolated areas, visits to rural and isolated schools and areas, activities involving student teacher interaction with the community.

The questionnaires sent to teachers listed several areas of potential relevance to respondents in their current positions. Teachers were asked to indicate both how much importance had been given to each in their pre-service teacher education and how much importance they believe should have been placed on each in order to prepare them for their current position.

The right-hand side of Table 6.7 indicates that a majority of rural and isolated teachers considered that there should be great emphasis in the pre-service program on subject teaching and on discipline. Over 40 per cent of teachers also reported that there should be great emphasis on individualising instruction, curriculum development and CCP or work program planning. Of the items in the list, those aspects which rural and isolated teachers considered should be given least emphasis were living in a

rural community, multicultural education and issues related to Aboriginal education. These items were nonetheless considered to be of at least moderate importance by a majority of the teachers. These results suggest that, while teachers consider that aspects of their pre-service program oriented towards preparing them for teaching in a specific context are important, they attach greater importance to those aspects which have wide application in a number of contexts.

Table 6.7: Western teachers' opinions of the importance given to each area in their pre-service teacher education programs and importance which should be given to each

	IMPORTANCE ACTUALLY GIVEN (N=479-492)				IMPORTANCE WHICH SHOULD HAVE BEEN GIVEN (N=460-474)			
	NONE %	LITTLE %	MODER-ATE %	GREAT %	NONE %	LITTLE %	MODER-ATE %	GREAT %
Subject teaching	1	17	47	35	-	2	41	57
Teaching multigrades	50	38	10	2	8	16	51	29
Living in a rural community	72	24	3	-	4	26	52	19
School/community relations	38	40	17	6	-	15	58	27
Individualising instruction	10	42	36	12	-	6	50	44
Curriculum development	9	26	44	21	1	5	50	44
Discipline	9	36	44	11	-	2	43	54
Teaching exceptional children within mainstream	32	44	20	4	-	16	52	32
CCP/work program planning	15	28	37	20	1	4	50	45
Utilising the local environment	22	48	25	5	1	14	59	26
Multicultural education	40	32	22	6	3	31	53	13
Administrative duties	44	42	12	2	2	22	52	24
Issues related to Aboriginal education	48	33	16	3	4	32	48	16

There were some important differences in the perceptions of western Queensland teachers with respect to the emphasis placed on various aspects of their pre-service program according to the recency of their graduation. Responses to items for which there was a statistically significant difference are shown in Table A.6.1, Appendix 3. This table shows that teachers who have graduated since 1980 consider that there was more emphasis on a number of issues in their pre-service programs, in particular on: living in a rural community, school/community relations, curriculum development, teaching exceptional children within the mainstream, CCP/work program planning, utilising the local environment, multicultural education and issues related to Aboriginal education.

A comparison of the opinions of western teachers as to the emphasis which should have been placed on each of the aspects of pre-service teacher education with the opinions of coastal teachers (shown on the right hand side of Table 6.8) reveals,

nonetheless, that a greater proportion of rural teachers believe emphasis should be given to issues such as teaching multigrades, living in a rural community, school/community relationship and administrative duties. Teachers' perceptions of the desirable content of pre-service teacher education are therefore influenced to some degree by the context in which they are teaching. It would be more likely, for example, that skills and knowledge in areas such as teaching multigrades would be required of teachers in rural areas than in non-rural areas.

Table 6.8: Coastal and near coastal teachers' opinions of the importance given to each area in their pre-service teacher education program and importance which should be given to each

	IMPORTANCE ACTUALLY GIVEN (N=379-392)				IMPORTANCE WHICH SHOULD HAVE BEEN GIVEN (N=371-380)			
	NONE	LITTLE	MODER-ATE	GREAT	NONE	LITTLE	MODER-ATE	GREAT
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Subject teaching	2	16	48	22	1	2	41	57
Teaching multigrades	57	33	9	1	9	24	52	16
Living in a local community	68	25	6	1	9	41	44	6
School/community relations	40	41	17	2	3	24	57	16
Individualising instruction	14	40	35	11	-	7	45	48
Curriculum development	13	29	42	16	-	7	48	45
Discipline	13	39	41	6	-	4	45	51
Teaching exceptional children within mainstream	45	40	13	2	1	18	57	25
CCP/work program planning	21	34	35	11	2	8	52	39
Utilising the local environment	32	45	20	3	2	23	59	16
Multicultural education	54	31	11	4	6	33	51	9
Administrative duties	47	36	14	2	3	37	49	11
Issues related to Aboriginal education	64	25	8	2	8	41	44	6

It is also useful to examine the difference between the "actual" and "ideal" importance attached to each of the aspects by rural and isolated teachers (the left and right hand sides of Table 6.7 respectively). These reveal that teachers considered more emphasis should have been given to each of the areas listed. These teachers considered that much more importance should have been given, in particular, to discipline, individualising instruction, teaching multigrades, teaching exceptional children within the mainstream and CCP or work program planning.

Further analyses were undertaken to determine the "actual" and "ideal" ratings given to each area of pre-service teacher education by various sub-groups of teachers. The responses of the following sub-groups were examined: western primary teachers, western secondary teachers, western primary teachers teaching in small (i.e. less than

six teachers) schools, western primary teachers teaching in larger (i.e. more than five teachers) schools.

Table 6.9 shows the proportion of western primary teachers who considered that each activity **was** given great importance in their pre-service preparation and the proportion who considered each activity **should** have been given great importance.

Western primary teachers reported that greatest importance should have been given to: subject teaching, curriculum development, CCP/work program planning and individualising instruction. An examination of the differences in rank orders between the actual and ideal columns reveals that the greatest discrepancy was in the area of teaching multigrades.

Table 6.9: Proportion of western primary teachers rating each area as of great importance in pre-service teacher education

	GREAT IMPORTANCE ACTUALLY GIVEN (N=192-198)		GREAT IMPORTANCE SHOULD HAVE BEEN GIVEN (N=184-191)	
	%	(Rank)	%	(Rank)
Subject teaching	32	(1)	48	(1)
Teaching multigrades	2	(11)	38	(6)
Living in a rural community	1	(12)	16	(10)
School/community relations	8	(7)	26	(8)
Individualising instruction	15	(4)	43	(4)
Curriculum development	28	(2)	41	(5)
Discipline	12	(5)	45	(2)
Teaching exceptional children within mainstream	6	(9)	31	(7)
CCP/work program planning	26	(3)	33	(3)
Utilising the local environment	8	(7)	22	(9)
Multicultural education	9	(6)	13	(13)
Administrative duties	1	(12)	16	(10)
Issues related to Aboriginal education	3	(10)	14	(12)

As Table 6.10 shows, this difference is somewhat more acute for western primary teachers teaching in smaller schools. Indeed, these teachers saw this as the greatest need in their pre-service program. Other areas which teachers in small schools considered to be of greatest importance were: CCP or work program planning, subject teaching, and individualising instruction.

Table 6.10: **Proportion of primary teachers in small western schools (i.e. schools with 1-5 teachers) rating each area as of great importance in pre-service teacher education**

	GREAT IMPORTANCE ACTUALLY GIVEN (N=62-64)		GREAT IMPORTANCE SHOULD HAVE BEEN GIVEN (N=58-63)	
	%	(Rank)	%	(Rank)
Subject teaching	29	(7)	45	(3)
Teaching multigrades	3	(10)	50	(1)
Living in a rural community	2	(12)	26	(9)
School/community relations	6	(7)	35	(7)
Individualising instruction	18	(3)	44	(4)
Curriculum development	29	(1)	39	(5)
Discipline	14	(5)	36	(6)
Teaching exceptional children within mainstream	6	(7)	31	(8)
CCP/work program planning	18	(3)	48	(2)
Utilising the local environment	6	(7)	20	(10)
Multicultural education	3	(10)	10	(13)
Administrative duties	3	(10)	15	(12)
Issues related to Aboriginal education	2	(12)	16	(11)

The areas of greatest importance for primary teachers in larger western primary schools were: discipline, subject teaching, individualising instruction and curriculum development. The area of teaching multigrades was still relatively important for teachers in the larger primary schools and there was still a large gap between these teachers' perceptions of their ideal preparation in this area and the preparation they actually received.

Table 6.11: Proportion of western primary teachers in larger schools (i.e. schools with more than 5 teachers) rating each area as of great importance in pre-service teacher education

	GREAT IMPORTANCE ACTUALLY GIVEN (N=130-135)		GREAT IMPORTANCE SHOULD HAVE BEEN GIVEN (N=126-131)	
	%	(Rank)	%	(Rank)
Subject teaching	33	(1)	49	(2)
Teaching multigrades	1	(11)	33	(5)
Living in a rural community	-	(13)	12	(13)
School/community relations	8	(8)	22	(9)
Individualising instruction	13	(4)	43	(3)
Curriculum development	28	(3)	42	(4)
Discipline	19	(6)	50	(1)
Teaching exceptional children within mainstream	6	(9)	32	(6)
CCP/work program planning	30	(2)	32	(6)
Utilising the local environment	9	(7)	23	(8)
Multicultural education	11	(5)	15	(11)
Administrative duties	1	(11)	16	(10)
Issues related to Aboriginal education	4	(10)	13	(12)

The results for secondary teachers are shown in Table 6.12. This shows that the areas rated of greatest importance by secondary teachers were: subject teaching, discipline, curriculum development, CCP or work program planning, and individualising instruction. For secondary teachers, the greatest differences between actual and ideal ratings were for the areas of discipline, individualising instruction, curriculum development, teaching exceptional children within the mainstream and CCP or work program planning.

Table 6.12: Proportion of western secondary teachers rating each area as of great importance in pre-service teacher education

	GREAT IMPORTANCE ACTUALLY GIVEN (N=202-213)		GREAT IMPORTANCE SHOULD HAVE BEEN GIVEN (N=192-203)	
	%	(Rank)	%	(Rank)
Subject teaching	39	(1)	68	(1)
Teaching multigrades	2	(9)	16	(12)
Living in a rural community	< 1	(13)	20	(10)
School/community relations	2	(9)	27	(9)
Individualising instruction	6	(5)	43	(5)
Curriculum development	14	(2)	47	(3)
Discipline	10	(4)	67	(2)
Teaching exceptional children within mainstream	1	(11)	36	(6)
CCP/work program planning	13	(3)	47	(3)
Utilising the local environment	2	(9)	29	(7)
Multicultural education	3	(6)	13	(13)
Administrative duties	1	(11)	28	(8)
Issues related to Aboriginal education	3	(6)	18	(1)

6.3 Summary

About two-thirds of teachers in western Queensland had a Diploma of Teaching as a pre-service qualification and a smaller proportion of western teachers compared to coastal teachers had gained a certificate of teaching on completion of their pre-service preparation. About a third of each group had gained their pre-service qualification from Brisbane College of Advanced Education (Kelvin Grove) and about 10 per cent of both western and coastal teachers had interstate qualifications. Half of the western teachers had completed their pre-service education since 1980, compared with one-fifth of the coastal teachers.

Only about one-fifth of the western teachers reported that they had had any activities or experiences within the pre-service program to prepare them specifically for teaching in rural and isolated areas. The most useful pre-service activities experienced by the western teachers were practice teaching in rural and isolated areas or in small schools or in a multigrade situation, and units on teaching in rural and

isolated areas. The experiences which western teachers and parents considered could potentially be of most value in preparing teachers to teach in rural and isolated areas were practice teaching in rural and isolated areas, and courses on remediation of low-achieving children. Also of value, but to a lesser extent, were working with composite classes, information on rural and isolated areas given by people with appropriate experience, visits to rural and isolated schools and communities, and subjects on teaching in small and isolated communities. Working with composite classes was seen to be of more value by primary than secondary teachers and by primary teachers in smaller schools.

Both western and coastal teachers believed that there should be a great emphasis in pre-service programs on subject teaching, discipline, individualising instruction, curriculum development and planning. A greater proportion of western teachers than coastal teachers reported that there should be great emphasis on teaching multigrades, living in a rural community, school/community relationships and administrative duties. Some differences between western primary and secondary teachers were also evident. More primary teachers felt that teaching multigrades should be emphasised, while secondary teachers were more concerned than primary teachers about subject teaching and discipline. Western teachers in small primary schools rated the following as more important aspects of their pre-service preparation than did western teachers in larger primary schools: teaching multigrades, living in a rural community, school/community relationships, planning. Discipline, on the other hand, was considered to be less important by teachers in small western schools.

CHAPTER 7

INDUCTION AND IN-SERVICE SUPPORT

7.1 Teachers' perspectives

Respondents from both teacher groups were asked various questions regarding their experiences in adjusting to life in their present teaching situation and any induction or in-service support they may have had. They were also asked to give suggestions as to ways of supporting and advising teachers in the rural setting.

When asked to place a value on the support given by various agencies, western and coastal teachers gave different responses in as much as the rural teachers valued any support given them more highly than did their coastal counterparts (Table 7.1). For example, one-half of the rural respondents rated regular contact with a subject specialist as being "very important", whereas only one-third of the coastal respondents reacted similarly. A high percentage of the former respondents were high school teachers and these rated contact with a subject specialist more highly than did their primary counterparts (Table A.7.1, Appendix 3).

Table 7.1: Importance given by teacher respondents to various kinds of support with teaching

	WESTERN (N=488–499)				COASTAL (N=393–403)			
	NOT IMP. %	SL. IMP. %	MOD. IMP. %	VERY IMP. %	NOT IMP. %	SL. IMP. %	MOD. IMP. %	VERY IMP. %
Regular contact with subject specialists, or unlimited telephone or other media access to a subject specialist	3	11	36	50	4	16	46	35
In-service support conducted in local communities	2	11	39	48	3	13	40	45
In-service support that requires travelling to another centre but allows contact with other colleagues	2	11	40	48	4	18	44	34
Regular advisory contacts with inspector of schools	7	23	43	27	16	34	35	15

At the same time the teachers were asked to value the importance of other resources in helping teachers (Table 7.2). Generally, the responses of both groups of teachers were very similar. The exception to this was in the value placed on the use of computer and satellite communications. The rural respondents' valued these

technological advances more highly than did their coastal colleagues. One reason given for this was that through computers "country" children can keep up with advances that are normally confined to cities.

Table 7.2: **Importance given by teacher respondents to different resources in helping teachers**

	WESTERN (N=471-498)				COASTAL (N=384-399)			
	NOT IMP. %	SL. IMP. %	MOD. IMP. %	VERY IMP. %	NOT IMP. %	SL. IMP. %	MOD. IMP. %	VERY IMP. %
Ready access to good teaching resources from outside your centre	1	7	31	62	3	10	36	52
Availability of detailed school programs in curricula areas	1	5	35	59	3	5	31	61
Availability of local centre relief staff to release you to explore locally areas of professional concern	3	12	34	51	5	14	35	46
Assistance with evaluation (testing items and procedures)	2	11	41	46	4	19	45	32
Use of computers	5	19	42	34	9	24	47	20
Use of satellite communications	14	23	39	24	33	26	33	7

More than half of each study group regarded "Ready access to good teaching resources from outside your centre" as being very important. The rural teachers who responded in this way were more likely to be recent graduates (post-1980) (Table A.7.2, Appendix 3).

Respondents were asked to comment on the use made of computers and satellite technology in helping to improve the quality of education afforded to school students. In general, the comments made by both groups were similar with about one-quarter of the western and one-third of coastal teachers saying that they do not use or do not have access to a computer. Some reasons given for non-use included lack of knowledge, need for more in-service courses, expense, insufficient equipment, storage problems, inaccessibility, and lack of maintenance or resource personnel.

Some of the reasons why computers were used included: to motivate pupils, to provide a variety of learning experiences, to develop pupils' keyboard skills, to provide a challenge to pupils, to build pupils' confidence and to develop their computer awareness. It was thought that the use and knowledge of computers would mean that country children were not disadvantaged when sent to boarding schools or TAFE colleges. Different areas taught using computers were word processing, computer literacy and awareness, keyboard skills, and programming.

Teachers were asked how much difficulty they experienced adjusting to their present situation, personally, socially, and professionally (Table 7.3). In each category the responses indicated that the western respondents had a greater degree of difficulty than the coastal teachers. About one-half of the western teachers had at least some difficulty adjusting, in each of the areas, whereas only one-third of their coastal colleagues had difficulty.

Table 7.3: Teacher respondents' difficulty in adjusting to personal, social and professional aspects of present situation

	WESTERN (N=496-497)			COASTAL (N=392-399)		
	NO DIFFICULTY	SOME DIFFICULTY	CONSIDERABLE DIFFICULTY	NO DIFFICULTY	SOME DIFFICULTY	CONSIDERABLE DIFFICULTY
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Personal	47	37	16	68	26	6
Social	51	38	11	69	26	5
Professional	46	44	11	60	31	9

In the rural sample, as Table A.7.3 in Appendix 3 shows, more married teachers than single had no difficulty adjusting at a personal level. Those western teachers who had lived for a longer time in the district reported experiencing less difficulty in adjusting personally, socially or professionally than did those teachers who had lived in the district for shorter periods (Table A.7.4, Appendix 3).

Western teachers were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed with different statements on various aspects of in-service and induction programs (Table 7.4). Ninety per cent agreed that there was a need for such courses. About three-quarters thought that videos of and/or visits to rural and isolated schools would be useful. A similar fraction of respondents thought that courses taken before teachers take up duty and/or during the early months of an appointment would be helpful.

Table 7.4: Western teacher respondents' extent of agreement or disagreement with statements concerning in-service and induction programs

	(N=450-468)					
	ND* %	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %
Information provided was inaccurate or misleading	16	8	-	24	11	1
People giving the courses were out of touch with reality	10	8	40	19	19	5
There is no need for courses; good teachers can cope	2	44	46	5	3	1
Videos of rural and isolated schools and areas would be useful	4	2	7	17	58	13
Visits to rural and isolated schools and areas would be useful	3	-	5	14	59	20
Courses should be given before teachers take up appointment	2	1	8	19	50	20
Courses should be given during early months of appointment	3	1	8	12	53	23

* ND = no opinion, SD = strongly disagree, D = disagree, N = neither agree nor disagree, A = agree, SA = strongly agree.

Teachers were asked to value the information, support and advice given to them by various sources. These have been grouped rather broadly. The first group of sources would be relevant to most teachers; most of the second group of sources would be relevant only to a few (see Table 7.5).

Of the sources relevant to all teachers, the advice and support given by other members of the school staff were most valued by teachers. Family and friends, visiting specialist teachers, school administration, in-service activities and courses and local individuals were also valuable sources of advice for many teachers. On the other hand, 60 per cent of western teachers reported that the advice and support they received from regional office and inspectors were of little or no value.

Among western teachers who expressed an opinion, twice as many female teachers as male found that family and friends were of great value as a support during their settling-in time in the community and school. Also, the percentage of women who regarded the school induction package to be of great value was twice that of the men. More women also found the beginning teaching seminars valuable. The school P. & C. or P. & F. was found to be more valuable to a greater percentage of administrative personnel than those with no administrative duties. In regard to the Regional Office and Catholic Education Office seminars, more primary teachers found them valuable than secondary, and Catholic teachers appreciated them more than government teachers; teachers who had graduated since 1980 found them of less value than teachers who graduated prior to 1980. (These results are set out in Tables A.7.5, A.7.6 and A.7.7 in Appendix 3.)

Table 7.5: Value placed by teacher respondents on information, support and advice from various sources

	NO OPINION %	NO VALUE %	LITTLE VALUE %	SOME VALUE %	GREAT VALUE %
Sources relevant to all teachers (N=428-479)					
School induction package	25	10	18	31	16
School administration	5	8	17	46	24
Other teachers and staff	3	3	10	35	49
Regional office and inspectors	10	28	32	24	6
In-service activities and courses	16	3	13	48	21
Visiting specialist teachers	18	4	12	42	25
Community social groups/clubs	27	13	19	34	7
Local individuals and families	12	9	16	43	20
P. & C. or P. & F.	17	19	26	30	8
Family and friends	15	11	15	33	26
Welcome activities arranged by council	54	18	10	15	3
Sources not relevant to all teachers (N=314-399)					
Beginning teacher seminars	36	12	16	25	12
North-West induction seminar	67	7	5	12	9
Class 5 seminar	85	4	2	6	3
Jumbunna seminar	92	4	2	2	-
Regional office/Catholic Education Office seminars	69	5	2	18	7

Teachers were asked to comment on the induction or in-service support they would like to see developed to assist teachers living and working in isolated areas. About 60 per cent of the western teachers responded to this question. Many items were suggested by only a small percentage and some of these have been combined. Items have been grouped under three general headings: support personnel, personal needs, and professional needs.

Support personnel: other teachers; school staff; experienced teachers; previous teachers; itinerant specialists; community members; administration; subject masters; and resource teachers.

Personal needs: more benefits for being isolated; and support in the following areas: fitting into the community, factual information about the specific area, use of leisure time, meeting individual teacher's needs, and practical help.

Professional needs: regular assistance; resource interchange; assistance to attend in-service; supply teachers and support in the following areas: teaching a variety of

students, composite classes, group teaching strategies, discipline, new and alternative teaching methods, curriculum/subject matter, planning, assessment, exam writing, ROSBA, administration, and making the most of available resources.

7.2 The community's perspective

Community members were asked whether they should be involved in various activities to help teachers adapt to living and working in the local school and community (Table 7.6). Most of the responses were similar for the western and coastal groups. Almost without exception three-quarters of the respondents agreed with each statement, although a noticeably larger proportion of rural community members indicated that they should develop friendships and visit socially with the teachers.

Table 7.6: Community respondents' views as to whether community members should be involved in helping teachers adapt to living and working in the local school and community

	WESTERN (N=204-209)			COASTAL (N=174-176)		
	NO OPINION %	YES %	NO %	NO OPINION %	YES %	NO %
Being involved in school activities	3	2	95	2	6	93
Helping through the P. & C. or P. & F.	5	5	90	4	7	89
Introducing teachers to community organisations and activities	8	9	84	8	18	74
Developing friendships with teachers out of hours	9	14	77	12	25	63
Assisting in the classroom	5	19	76	5	24	71
Inviting teachers to visit socially with families	15	23	62	16	39	45

Proportionally more men than women reported that the community should assist in the classroom and be involved in school activities (Table A.7.8, Appendix 3). Also, the smaller the population of the community, the more assisting in the classroom was considered important.

7.3 Summary

Most teachers see a great need for induction and in-service courses particularly to help new teachers settle into rural and isolated schools and communities. There are many different ways this can be achieved but other teachers and staff at the school are seen as a valuable resource in a support and advisory role.

Teachers need access to good teaching resources and personnel. Computers and satellite communications are becoming important in teaching, especially in the rural areas.

Rural teachers have greater difficulty adjusting to their new situation although married teachers fare better than single. Rural teachers value all kinds of support highly.

Most community members indicated that there should be a high level of support from the community for teachers to help them adjust to their new area and school.

CHAPTER 8

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

8.1 Characteristics of western Queensland teachers and schools

Information obtained from the present study on the personal details of teachers in western Queensland supports the general Australian literature on teachers in rural schools. For example, previous studies indicate that these teachers are generally younger than teachers in non-rural areas. In the present study, teachers from the western areas were three times as likely to be under 25 and much less likely to be over 30, than were teachers from coastal and near coastal areas of Queensland. The greater youth of the western teachers was associated with their greater tendency to be single.

Previous Australian research has indicated that rural teachers are generally less experienced at teaching than their urban counterparts. Certainly this was the case in the present study where it was found that teachers in western Queensland had relatively little teaching experience: 41 per cent of western teachers, as opposed to 16 per cent of coastal teachers, had less than four years' teaching experience. Moreover, 30 per cent of western teachers (compared with 15 per cent of coastal teachers) were in their first teaching appointment.

Western teachers were more likely than coastal teachers to have gained a diploma of teaching on completion of their pre-service teacher education; coastal teachers, on the other hand, were more likely than western teachers to have gained a certificate in teaching as a pre-service qualification.

Much of the literature points to a high rate of mobility among rural teachers. This study found that western Queensland teachers tended to have been in a particular town or district and in a particular school for a shorter time than had coastal teachers, and that a much greater proportion of western than coastal teachers intended to leave their present schools by the end of the next year.

It is not true to say, however, that all teachers in western Queensland are young and inexperienced. There was a significant group of older, more experienced teachers who had been in the present school and district for considerable periods of time. Thus, 34 per cent of the western Queensland teachers were over 30 years old, 33 per cent had at least seven years' teaching experience, 22 per cent had lived in the same district for four years or more, and 17 per cent had been teaching at their present school for at least four years.

The study's results regarding school size also concur with the literature. The picture of the typical rural school that emerges from earlier research is one of smallness, both in numbers of teachers and numbers of pupils, with a greater need to conduct multiple-age classes. In the present study it was found that schools in western Queensland had lower numbers of teachers (twice as many western as coastal teachers taught in schools with ten or fewer teachers), smaller classes (three times as many western as coastal teachers had less than fifteen pupils in an average class), and more multi-age classes (a greater proportion of western than coastal teachers had responsibility for more than one year level).

8.2 Teaching in a western Queensland school

A considerably smaller proportion of western teachers than coastal teachers (36 per cent compared with 51 per cent) had listed their present school as their first or second choice when seeking appointment, transfer or promotion. Although only about

one-fifth of western teachers reported being dissatisfied, twice as many western as coastal teachers reported feeling dissatisfied or very dissatisfied on hearing of their appointment to their present school.

The results suggest, however, that teachers in western Queensland schools grew to like their situation: 50 per cent of western teachers became more satisfied and only 18 per cent became more dissatisfied since taking up their appointment in a rural and isolated school. Western teachers reported gaining satisfaction from working in a school with friendly pupils and good staff relationships, meeting the challenge of new responsibilities and a different lifestyle, and making new friends in the local community. It is also interesting to note that a far higher proportion of western than coastal teachers expressed interest in a future appointment in an isolated school.

Yet teachers in western schools did not perceive their work to be easy. The characteristics of the students in western Queensland schools, as perceived by their teachers, lend some credence to the view presented in the literature that rural pupils tend to come disproportionately from lower socioeconomic groups and to have lower levels of motivation and of educational achievement. In the present study, a higher proportion of western teachers than coastal teachers reported that their pupils lacked motivation and were low achievers, and western teachers described their classes as containing a higher proportion of children from low socioeconomic backgrounds.

Many of the other potential difficulties of teaching and living in rural and isolated areas that are indicated in the literature were perceived as problems by western teachers in the current study. These included the difficulty of planning programs and lessons without adequate knowledge of the local situation and without adequate resources, having to teach subjects for which they had not been prepared, professional isolation (lack of access to support facilities), social and cultural isolation (lack of social life, distance from family and friends), being more in the public eye, and being expected to participate in community activities.

Those teachers who intended to leave their present western school within two years most frequently cited as reasons for this their absence from family and friends and lack of recreational facilities. Dissatisfaction with the school environment was mentioned infrequently as a reason for intending to leave.

The above results indicate that more information could be provided to teachers posted to schools in western Queensland in order to alleviate their initial feelings of anxiety. In particular, consideration might be given to providing more opportunities for teachers newly-appointed to western schools to meet with teachers experienced in teaching in western Queensland so that these teachers could share with their apprehensive colleagues their experiences of teaching and living in a western Queensland school and community.

8.3 Qualities of teachers in western Queensland schools

Earlier studies and reports on rural teaching have suggested the use of suitability criteria in selecting teachers to be appointed to rural schools. The importance of sensitivity to rural values and circumstances, interests relevant to rural life and a capacity for self-reliance have been mentioned. In the current study, broadmindedness and tolerance, an outgoing personality, interest in sporting activities, willingness to take on new roles in the school, ability to interact with the community, readiness to join community organisations, and ability to adapt to a different lifestyle were seen as important in that they were mentioned as desirable teacher qualities and skills more often by western than by coastal teachers. From the teachers' perspective, then, it is more important for teachers in western schools than in coastal schools to possess or to be able to develop a number of qualities. The implications of these results need to be carefully considered by those responsible for selecting teachers for

service in rural and isolated schools and by providers of pre-service and in-service teacher education.

8.4 Pre-service teacher education

The results also indicate that more emphasis in pre-service teacher education programs should be given to preparing teachers for a remote or rural posting.

Teachers' responses reveal that course components specifically aimed at rural teaching were not widely available in the courses they undertook. This supports claims by previous researchers that teacher preparation programs generally provide little preparation directed specifically at teaching in rural schools. Although this finding seems to conflict with the evidence of the earlier Board of Teacher Education (1983) survey, in which a majority of final-year teacher education students reported feeling adequately prepared to teach in small country schools, it may well be that the adequacy or otherwise of preparation becomes apparent only when the teacher is placed in a rural teaching situation.

Practice teaching in a rural school is recognised in the rural education literature as one of the best ways to prepare student teachers for a rural posting. In the present study, the aspect of pre-service programs most often mentioned as particularly beneficial in such preparation was practice teaching in a rural or isolated school or in a setting with rural school characteristics (e.g. very small number of pupils or multigrade classes). This finding suggests that this type of experience should be more widely available to student teachers. At the time the present study was carried out, the opportunity to undertake practice teaching in rural situations was available to only very few Queensland student teachers, and not all institutions ensured that students at least had experience of multigrade classroom teaching.

Apart from practice teaching in rural or multigrade classrooms, courses on remediation of low-achieving students (as noted above, western teachers were more likely than coastal teachers to describe their pupils as low-achievers), information on rural and isolated areas given by people with appropriate experiences, visits to rural and isolated schools and areas, and subjects on teaching in small and isolated communities were seen by western respondents in the present study to be beneficial in preparing teachers for rural service.

While the study supports the literature in suggesting that certain components directed specifically at rural teaching should be included in pre-service courses, it is important to note that responses to the present survey indicate that course aspects with more general application (e.g. individualising instruction, discipline, curriculum development) are perceived by teachers as more important than those directed at a specific teaching context.

The present study also indicates that certain course features aimed at preparing students for rural teaching are not perceived by rural teachers and parents as particularly beneficial. In particular, the reading of literature on rural teaching was not considered to be of great value.

There were differences in the views of primary and secondary western teachers as to the value of certain aspects of pre-service programs as preparation for "country" postings, and these would need to be considered in program design (e.g. working with composite classes was seen as more beneficial by primary teachers).

8.5 Induction and in-service support

The findings of the present study concerning induction and in-service support have important implications for those whose responsibility it is to provide such support or who could provide such support.

The impression gained from the Australian rural teaching literature is that teachers have usually been given no special induction or in-service preparation for rural teaching before taking up appointments in the country. While teachers in the current study were not asked whether they had received such preparation, they were asked whether they saw a need for it. Almost all respondents said there was a need for in-service and induction programs for teachers taking up rural appointments.

One suggestion from previous studies is that the teacher induction process be community-based, and in the present survey community members felt they should be involved in various activities to help teachers adapt to living and working in the local school and community. Interestingly though, it would appear that some ways in which support could be provided (e.g. through community social clubs or through the local Council) are presently little used or are seen by many teachers as having little or no value.

A significant finding with implications for providers of induction and in-service programs is that a quarter of western teacher respondents felt that the people giving such courses were out of touch with reality. A clear majority of western teachers thought that videos of, and visits to, rural and isolated schools would be useful as induction or in-service activities.

The small size of many rural schools (particularly the fact that many are one-teacher schools) makes the provision of a school induction program difficult, but it may be that more effort could be made by school administrators and regional authorities in the provision of school induction programs. The finding that teachers regarded the advice and support given by other teachers on staff as the most valuable form of assistance indicates that the potential exists for more experienced western teachers to play a leading role in inducting recruits to western schools into their new roles. Several recommendations and suggestions concerning induction programs in general are contained in reports of the Board of Teacher Education (1981a, 1981b).

As is noted in the literature, rural teachers need special consideration concerning in-service education and support because of their isolation from many agencies and resources available to those in the coastal strip. It is significant that in the present study, western teachers valued any type of support more highly than did coastal teachers.

Previous reports have referred to the potential of advanced communications technology (e.g. satellite communications systems) for enhancing the in-service education and support available to rural teachers. In the present survey, the use of satellite communications was rated as moderately or very important by more than 60 per cent of western teachers (a much higher proportion than that of coastal teachers).

8.6 Conclusion

The results of this study both confirm many of the findings of earlier reports on teaching in rural Australia and expand the knowledge base with respect to teaching in western Queensland. The study extends the literature by examining the responses of various subgroups of teachers. Responses were examined, for example, according to teachers' gender, marital status, the level of schooling at which they taught, the type of western school (government or non-government), the length of time the teacher had been in the school or the district, and school size.

Generally, the results indicate that the expectations placed upon teachers in western Queensland schools are greater than those placed upon teachers teaching in coastal Queensland. Western Queensland teachers are younger and less experienced than those teaching in coastal schools. Yet there is a lack of provision in pre-service teacher education programs for preparing teachers for teaching in rural and isolated

schools, and induction and in-service support also appears to be less than adequate.

In a state such as Queensland where a significant proportion of teachers will teach in a rural or isolated school at some time during their teaching careers, it can be argued that more should be done to help teachers appointed to school in these areas of the state and in promoting the benefits of teaching in western Queensland.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX 1: SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRES

(i) Teacher schedules

Note: Amendments to the schedule relating to coastal and near coastal teachers have been noted in italics.

BOARD OF TEACHER EDUCATION
QUEENSLAND

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P.O. Box 305
TOOWONG Q 4066
Telephone 870 7188

TEACHING IN RURAL AND ISOLATED AREAS

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Teacher,

As part of its research program, the Board of Teacher Education, in cooperation with two members of the School of Education at James Cook University of North Queensland, is undertaking a study of teaching in rural and isolated areas of Queensland.

The study aims to provide an insight into the problems and needs of teachers and communities in rural and isolated areas of the State and so provide information which can be used to prepare and assist teachers taking up rural and isolated postings. We believe the findings will be particularly useful to those involved in the pre-service preparation of teachers and the administration of schools and will ultimately lead to an enhancement of the quality of education afforded to children in rural and isolated parts of Queensland. *(This paragraph deleted from coastal schedule.)*

(The study aims to provide an insight into the problems and needs of teachers and communities throughout Queensland, with special emphasis on rural and isolated areas. We believe the findings will be particularly useful to those involved in the pre-service preparation of teachers and the administration of schools and will ultimately lead to an enhancement of the quality of education afforded to children in Queensland.)

In trying to gain a clear insight into the needs of rural and isolated teachers and communities, the Board seeks your help as a teacher with first-hand experience of teaching in these areas. Through the enclosed questionnaire, we hope teachers and principals will be able to provide the Board with information which will allow us to gain a clearer vision of living and teaching in rural and isolated areas of Queensland. *(This paragraph deleted from coastal schedule.)*

(While the focus of the research is on rural and isolated areas, it is also necessary to obtain information from teachers and community members in city and coastal areas to determine common needs and problems as well as those specific to particular localities. Through the attached questionnaire, the Board hopes that you will be able to provide it with information which will allow us to gain a clearer insight into living and teaching in your community and school.)

To be of maximum value, we will need to have a high response rate from teachers and principals. We earnestly hope therefore that you will set aside some time within the next week to complete the questionnaire and return it to us in the envelope provided.

If you find the questionnaire format too restricting, please feel free to add any further information or comments in the spaces provided or on a separate sheet. If you have any queries, or if you would like to talk to us about the project, please contact the Board's Research Officer, Greg Duck, at the address given above.

2.

Finally, we assure you that all responses are strictly confidential. In no cases will individuals, schools or communities be identified when the results are reported. The identification number printed on each questionnaire is for recording from which areas responses are coming and for follow-up purposes.

We hope that you will help us by participating in this study. In accordance with our usual practice, we will forward in due course copies of the results to all schools which participated in the study.

Yours faithfully,

N.H. ERY,
Executive Officer.

Encl.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SURVEY OF TEACHERS

INTRODUCTION: Most questions can be answered by placing a tick (✓) in an appropriate box. In some instances you are asked to write a few words in the spaces provided. At the end of the schedule you are invited to make comments which may be helpful in explaining your responses or maybe provide additional information which you feel can contribute to the study.

Should you wish to contact the people carrying out the study, please write to Mr Greg Duck, Research Officer, Board of Teacher Education, P.O. Box 389, Timaru, C. 4000.

Thank you for your interest and cooperation. Would you please mail the completed schedule in the reply-paid envelope by 31 October 1985.

PERSONAL DETAILS

1. What is your sex?
   - Male 1 ☐
   - Female 2 ☐
   14

2. What is your marital status?
   - Married 1 ☐
   - Single 2 ☐
   - Other 3 ☐
   15

3. What is your age?
   - Under 25 1 ☐
   - 25-29 2 ☐
   - 30-39 3 ☐
   - 40 and over 4 ☐
   16

4. How long have you lived in this town or district?
   - Less than one year 1 ☐
   - 1-3 years 2 ☐
   - 4-6 years 3 ☐
   - 7-9 years 4 ☐
   - 10 years or more 5 ☐
   17

5. What type of primary and secondary schooling did you mostly have?

		Primary	Secondary	
Correspondence	1			18-19
Day school	2			
Boarding school	3			

6. (a) Where did you have most of your primary and secondary schooling?

		Primary	Secondary	
Capital city	1			20-21
Large provincial centre (20,000 and over)	2			
Medium county town (10,000 to 19,999)	3			
Country town (1,000 to 9,999)	4			
Small town (under 1,000)	5			
On a property	6			

(b) Approximately how many teachers were on the staff of the primary and secondary schools you attended (answer if appropriate)?

Primary 22-23
Secondary 24-25

7. Do you have relations living in your present town or district?
   - Yes 1 ☐
   - No 2 ☐
   26

PRESENT TEACHING SITUATION

8. Is this town and district the one in which you spent most of your childhood?
   - Yes 1 ☐
   - No 2 ☐
   27

9. If your answer to Question 8 was "No", is the town and district similar in population size to the one in which you spent most of your childhood?
   - Yes 1 ☐
   - No 2 ☐
   28

10. How many full-time teachers, (pre-school, primary and secondary) are at your present school?
    - 1 1 ☐
    - 2-3 2 ☐
    - 4-5 3 ☐
    - 6-7 4 ☐
    - 8-10 5 ☐
    - 11-15 6 ☐
    - 16-25 7 ☐
    - Over 25 8 ☐
    29

3.

11. Please indicate your present position:
    - Senior administrative staff, e.g. inspector 1 ☐
    - Non-teaching principal 2 ☐
    - Teaching principal 3 ☐
    - Non-teaching administrative staff 4 ☐
    - Teaching administrative staff 5 ☐
    30-31
    - Specialist teacher, e.g. remedial, librarian 6 ☐
    - Full-time teacher 7 ☐
    - Part-time position 8 ☐
    - Other, e.g. itinerant PCS teacher, relief 9 ☐
    - Not currently employed 10 ☐

12. If you are a principal, for which departments and centres are you responsible (tick all that apply)?
    - Pre-school 1 ☐
    - Primary 2 ☐
    - Secondary 3 ☐
    - Other (specify) 4 ☐
    32
    .....

13. If you teach classes regularly, in which part(s) of the school system do you teach (tick all that apply)?
    - Pre-school 1 ☐
    - Primary 2 ☐
    - Secondary 3 ☐
    - Other (specify) 4 ☐
    33
    .....

14. In which type of school are you employed?
    - Government 1 ☐
    - Catholic 2 ☐
    - Non-government/non-Catholic 3 ☐
    - Not currently employed 4 ☐
    34

15. What is the average size of the class(es) you teach?
    - Not applicable 1 ☐
    - 15 or less 2 ☐
    - 16-20 3 ☐
    - 21-25 4 ☐
    - 26-30 5 ☐
    - Over 30 6 ☐
    35

4.

16. On average, how many year levels (grades) are in the class(es) you teach?
    - One year level only 1 ☐
    - Two year levels 2 ☐
    - Three year levels 3 ☐
    - Four year levels 4 ☐
    - More than four year levels 5 ☐
    36
    - Other (e.g. remedial teacher - please specify) 6 ☐
    .....
    - Not applicable 7 ☐

17. What is the population of the town in which your present school is situated?
    - 0-199 1 ☐
    - 200-499 2 ☐
    - 500-999 3 ☐
    - 1000-2499 4 ☐
    - 2500-5000 5 ☐
    - Over 5000 6 ☐
    37
    - 10-199 1 ☐
    - 200-499 2 ☐
    - 500-999 3 ☐
    - 1000-2499 4 ☐
    - 2500-4999 5 ☐
    - 5000-9999 6 ☐
    - 10,000-19,999 7 ☐
    - 20,000-100,000 8 ☐
    - Over 100,000 9 ☐

18. What are the major occupations of the people in the town and district (tick all that apply)?
    - Crop production 1 ☐
    - Fishing 2 ☐
    - Wool production 3 ☐
    - Beef production 4 ☐
    - Dairy farming 5 ☐
    38
    - Mining 6 ☐
    - Railway 7 ☐
    - Tourism 8 ☐
    - Manufacturing 9 ☐

PRE-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION

19. What qualifications did you gain on completion of your pre-service teacher education course(s)?

Teaching certificate	1	☐	
Diploma of Teaching	2	☐	
Degree plus Dip.Ed. or Grad.Dip.Teach.	3	☐	39
B.Ed.	4	☐	
Other (please specify)	5	☐	
.....			

20.(a) From which institution did you receive your pre-service teacher education qualifications?

University of Queensland	1	☐	
BCAE: Mount Gravatt	2	☐	
Kelvin Grove	3	☐	
North Brisbane (Kedron/Carseldine)	4	☐	
McAuley College	5	☐	
Darling Downs IAE	6	☐	
Capricornia IAE	7	☐	40-41
James Cook University	8	☐	
JCUNQ(IAE)/ Townsville CAE	9	☐	
Other	10	☐	
.....			

(b) When did you complete this qualification? 19 42-43

21. Did your pre-service teacher education course provide you with any subjects, activities or experiences directly related to teaching in rural and isolated areas?
(Deleted from coastal schedule)

Yes	1	☐	
No	2	☐	44

22. If "yes" to Question 21, please specify those aspects which have proven most beneficial to you.

..... 45-49
.....
.....
.....
(Deleted from coastal schedule)

23. How valuable do you think the following experiences would be in preparing student teachers for service in rural and isolated areas?
(Deleted from coastal schedule)

	No value 1	Little value 2	Some value 3	Great value 4	
Practice teaching in rural and isolated areas					50
Subjects on teaching in small and isolated communities					51
Visits to rural and isolated schools and areas					52
Selected readings on rural and isolated schools and areas					53
Videotapes of rural and isolated schools and areas					54
Information on rural and isoalted areas given by people with appropriate experiences					55
Activities involving student interaction with the community					56
Working with composite classes					57
Courses on remediation of low-achieving students					58
Others					59
.....					60
.....					61
.....					62

24. Listed below are a number of areas which may be relevant to your current position.

In column 1, indicate how much importance was given to each of the areas in your pre-service teacher education program.

In column 2, indicate how much importance should have been placed on each area in your pre-service course in order to prepare you for your current position.

AREAS	Column 1: IMPORTANCE ACTUALLY GIVEN				Column 2: IMPORTANCE WHICH SHOULD HAVE BEEN GIVEN					
	None 1	Little 2	Mod. 3	Great 4	None 1	Little 2	Mod. 3	Great 4		
Subject teaching									63-64	
Teaching multigrades									65-66	
Living in a rural community									67-68	
School/community relations									69-70	
Individualising instruction									71-72	
Curriculum development									73-74	
Discipline									75-76	
Teaching exceptional children within mainstream									77-78	
CCP/work program planning									79-80	
Utilising the local environment									Card 2 06-01	
Multicultural education									08-09	
Administrative duties									10-11	
Issues related to Aboriginal education									12-13	

ATTITUDES TOWARDS PRESENT TEACHING SITUATION

25. How long have you been teaching at your present school? ..... years 14-15

26. How much longer do you plan to remain at your present school?

Want to leave immediately	1	☐	
End of this year	2	☐	
Next year	3	☐	
Two years	4	☐	16
Three years	5	☐	
More than three years	6	☐	

27. If you plan to leave your present school within a year or two, please list the three most important reasons for doing so.

(i) 17-22
.....
(ii) .....
.....
(iii) .....
.....

28. How long have you been teaching?

First year	1	☐	
1-3 years	2	☐	
4-6 years	3	☐	
7-9 years	4	☐	23
10-14 years	5	☐	
15 years or more	6	☐	

29. When you applied for appointment/ transfer/promotion to your present school, what was the order of preference you gave to the school?

1st choice	1	☐	
2nd choice	2	☐	
3rd choice	3	☐	
Greater than 3rd choice	4	☐	24
Not listed as a choice	5	☐	
Did not seek transfer	6	☐	

30. Were you teaching in a school immediately prior to taking up your present appointment (apart from normal leave breaks)

Yes	1	☐	
No	2	☐	25

31. Where was your previous appointment?

This is my first appointment	1	☐	
Capital city	2	☐	
Large provincial centre (20,000 and over)	3	☐	
Medium country town (10,000 to 19,999)	4	☐	26
Country town (1,000 to 9,999)	5	☐	
Small town (500 to 999)	6	☐	

32. What was your reaction when you first heard of your appointment to your present school?

Very satisfied	1	27
Satisfied	2	
Dissatisfied	3	
Very dissatisfied	4	
No particular reaction	5	

33.(a) Since taking up your present appointment, have you –

become more satisfied?	1	28
become more dissatisfied?	2	
remained about the same?	3	

(b) Please explain why you have become more, or less satisfied.

29-32

11.

34. (contd)

	Not applicable 1	Strongly disagree 2	Disagree 3	Neither agree nor disagree 4	Agree 5	Strongly agree 6	
Discipline is a problem							56
Many children come from difficult home backgrounds							57
CCP/program planning is a problem							60
Lack of knowledge of local situation and area makes program planning difficult							61
Lack of subject master or experienced staff makes program planning difficult							62
In general, the relationship between school and community is good							63
Teaching multigrades is a problem							64
Parents' interest in the children's education is low							65
Rural life is enjoyable							66
Interaction in a small community is enjoyable							67
It is difficult to establish new friendships or relationships							68
There is a lack of social life							69
There is a lack of sporting, cultural and leisure activities							70
Teachers find it hard to accept being in the public eye							71
Teachers are genuinely accepted as members of the community							72
Isolation from family and friends is a problem							73
Teachers tend to mix socially with other itinerants							74
The local people are friendly							75
Local people have a high regard for teachers							76
Local people go out of their way to make teachers part of the community							77
Teachers are expected to join in community activities							78
Teachers are regarded as outsiders							79

Please add comments you think are relevant.

10.

34. Please rate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements regarding your present position.

	Not applicable 1	Strongly disagree 2	Disagree 3	Neither agree nor disagree 4	Agree 5	Strongly agree 6	
Relationships among staff are happy and friendly							33
Staff are responsible, cooperative, and have initiative							34
Students are easy to teach							35
Students are friendly							36
Small classes enable better teaching							37
Job is challenging and demanding							38
Children seem to lack motivation							39
Having no one else nearby teaching the same subject or year level is a problem							40
There are very few experienced teachers from whom to ask advice							41
Teaching subjects not trained for is a problem							42
Inspectors do not visit frequently enough							43
There are very few professional associations in the area							44
There are limited opportunities to participate in professional development seminars							45
There is a lack of specialist advisory teachers							46
It is difficult to keep in touch with educational developments elsewhere							47
Appointments in remote areas are easy to obtain							48
There are many promotional opportunities in rural areas							49
There is much professional freedom and scope for innovation							50
Teachers get to know (class) parents well							51
There is a lack of resources for teaching							52
Teaching resource materials are difficult to obtain							53
Lack of personal privacy intrudes into professional work							54
There seems to be a high proportion of low achievers							55
There is a high proportion of children from low socio-economic backgrounds							56
Itinerants place more value on education than do local residents							57

12.

35. How important do you consider each of the following are in helping you with your teaching?

	Not important 1	Slightly important 2	Moderately important 3	Very important 4	Coed ?
Availability of detailed school programs in curricula areas					06
In-service support conducted in your local community					07
In-service support that requires travelling to another centre but allows contacts with other colleagues					08
Regular advisory contacts with your inspector of schools					09
Regular contact with subject specialists, or unlimited telephone or other media access to a subject specialist					10
Assistance with evaluation (testing items and procedures)					11
Ready access to good teaching resources from outside your centre					12
Availability of local centre relief staff to release you to explore locally, areas of professional concern					13
Use of satellite communications					14
Use of computers					15

36. Please comment on the use made of computer and satellite technology in helping to improve the quality of education afforded to your students.

16-19

37. How much difficulty, either personal, social, or professional did you experience in adjusting to your present situation?

	No difficulty 1	Some difficulty 2	Considerable difficulty 3	
Personal				20
Social				21
Professional				22

38. Please tell the extent of your agreement with each of the following aspects of in-service and induction programs.

(Deleted from coastal schedule)

	1 No opinion	2 Strongly disagree	3 Disagree	4 Neither agree nor disagree	5 Agree	6 Strongly agree	
Information provided was inaccurate or misleading							23
People giving the courses were out of touch with reality							24
There is no need for courses; good teachers can cope							25
Videos of rural and isolated schools and areas would be useful							26
Visits to rural and isolated schools and areas would be useful							27
Courses should be given before teachers take up appointment							28
Courses should be given during early months of appointment							29

39. Please indicate how valuable you found information/support/advice received from the following sources.

(Deleted from coastal schedule)

	1 No opinion	2 No value	3 Little value	4 Some value	5 Great value	
School induction package						30
School administration						31
Other teachers and staff						32
Regional Office and inspectors						33
Beginning teacher seminars						34
North-West induction seminar						35
Class 5 seminar						36
Jumbunna seminar						37
Regional Office/Catholic Education Office seminars						38
In-service activities or courses						39
Visiting specialist teachers						40
Community social groups						41
Community clubs						42
Local individuals and families						43
P & C or P & F						44
Family and friends						45
Welcome activities arranged by council						46
Others						
.....						47
.....						48

15.

42. Are you interested in teaching in another isolated school at your next or subsequent appointment(s)?

			Card 4
Yes	1	☐	
No	2	☐	06
Undecided	3	☐	

[Are you interested in teaching in an isolated school at your next or subsequent appointment(s)?

Yes	1	☐
No	2	☐
Undecided	3	☐

43.(a) If "yes" to Question 42, would you prefer the school to be –

the same size?	1	☐	
smaller?	2	☐	
larger?	3	☐	07
much larger?	4	☐	

(b) If "no" to Question 42, which of the following would be your preference?

Leave teaching	1	☐	
Teaching overseas or interstate	2	☐	
Brisbane	3	☐	
Coastal city	4	☐	
Inland city	5	☐	08
Large coastal town	6	☐	
Inland town	7	☐	
Small coastal town	8	☐	
Small inland town	9	☐	

44. General comments

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Thank you for your assistance with this project.

On completion of the questionnaire, please return it to the Board of Teacher Education in the reply-paid envelope provided.

40. Please comment on the induction or in-service support you would like to see developed to assist teachers living and working in rural and isolated areas. (Deleted from coastal schedule)

..... 49-52

.....

.....

41. How important would you rate each of the following qualities and abilities of teachers for living and teaching in schools and towns or districts such as yours?

	1 No opinion	2 Not important	3 Slightly important	4 Moderately important	5 Very important	6 Absolutely essential	
Ability to foster a good relationship with children							53
Ability to communicate with children							54
Teaching ability							55
Ability to maintain discipline							56
Dedication to teaching							57
Patience							58
Understanding							59
Maturity							60
Experience							61
Ability to set a good example for children							62
Ability to interact with the community							63
Knowledge of subjects taught							64
Common sense							65
Intelligence							66
Ability to adapt to a different lifestyle							67
Readiness to join community organisations							68
Broadmindedness and tolerance							69
Ability to teach multigrade classes							70
Willingness to work with low-ability students							71
Willingness to take on new roles within the school							72
Ability to "rough it"							73
High academic qualifications							74
Neat appearance							75
Outgoing personality							76
Interest in sporting activities							77
Others							
.....							78
.....							79

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(ii) Community schedules

Note: Amendments to this schedule relating to coastal and near coastal community members have been noted in italics.

BOARD OF TEACHER EDUCATION
QUEENSLAND

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39 Sherwood Road
TOOWONG Q 4066
P.O. Box 389
TOOWONG Q 4066
Telephone 870 7168

TEACHING IN RURAL AND ISOLATED AREAS

COMMUNITY QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Parent,

As part of its research program, the Board of Teacher Education, in cooperation with two members of the School of Education at James Cook University of North Queensland, is undertaking a study of teaching in rural and isolated areas of Queensland.

The study aims to provide an insight into the problems and needs of teachers and communities in rural and isolated areas of the State and so provide information which can be used to prepare and assist teachers taking up rural and isolated postings. We believe the findings will be particularly useful to those involved in the pre-service preparation of teachers and the administration of schools and will ultimately lead to an enhancement of the quality of education afforded to children in rural and isolated parts of Queensland.

(While the focus of the research is on rural and isolated areas, it is also necessary to obtain information from teachers and community members in city and coastal areas to determine common needs and problems as well as those specific to particular localities. Through the attached questionnaire, the Board hopes that you will be able to provide it with information which will allow us to gain a clearer vision of the educational needs and problems of your community.)

In trying to gain a clear insight into the needs of rural and isolated teachers and communities, the Board seeks your help as a parent with experience of schooling in these areas. Through the enclosed questionnaire, we hope parents will be able to provide the Board with information which will allow us to gain a clearer vision of living and teaching in rural and isolated areas of Queensland. *(This paragraph deleted from coastal schedule.)*

To be of maximum value, we will need to have a high response rate from parents. We earnestly hope therefore that you will set aside some time within the next week to complete the questionnaire and return it to us in the envelope provided.

If you find the questionnaire format too restricting, please feel free to add any further information or comments in the spaces provided or on a separate sheet. If you have any queries, or if you would like to talk to us about the project, please contact the Board's Research Officer, Greg Duck, at the address given above.

Finally, we assure you that all responses are strictly confidential. In no cases will individuals, schools or communities be identified when the results are reported. The identification number printed on each questionnaire is for recording from which areas responses are coming and for follow-up purposes.

We hope that you will help us by participating in this study. In accordance with our usual practice, we will forward in due course copies of the results to all schools which participated in the study.

Yours faithfully,

N.H. Fihy,
Executive Officer.
Encl.

COMMUNITY SURVEY

INTRODUCTION: All questions can be answered by placing a tick (✓) in the appropriate box; however, please feel free to add comments on the various questions. Questions should be answered with respect to the communities, schools and teachers which you know best.

Ideally, your answers should reflect the views of the household. At the end of the schedule you are invited to make comments which may be helpful in explaining your responses or maybe provide additional information which you feel can contribute to the study.

Should you wish to contact the people carrying out the study, please write to Mr Greg Duck, Research Officer, Board of Teacher Education, P.O. Box 389, Toowong, Q. 4066.

Thank you for your interest and cooperation. Would you please mail the completed schedule in the reply-paid envelope by 31 October 1985.

PERSONAL DETAILS

1. What is your sex?
   - Male 1 ☐
   - Female 2 ☐ 14

2. What is your age?
   - Under 25 1 ☐
   - 25-29 2 ☐
   - 30-39 3 ☐ 15
   - 40 and over 4 ☐

3. How long have you lived in this town or district?
   - Less than one year 1 ☐
   - 1-3 years 2 ☐
   - 4-6 years 3 ☐ 16
   - 7-9 years 4 ☐
   - 10 years or more 5 ☐

4. What type of primary and secondary schooling did you mostly have?

		Primary	Secondary	
Correspondence	1			17,18
Day school	2			
Boarding school	3			

primary and secondary schooling?

	Primary	Secondary	
Capital city			
Large provincial centre (20,000 and over)			
Medium country town (10,000 to 19,000)			
Country town (1,000 to 9,999)			19-20
Small town (under 1,000)			
On a property			

6. (a) What is the highest level of formal education you have completed to date?

None	1	
Some, but did not complete primary	2	
Completed primary	3	
Some secondary, but did not complete Junior	4	
Junior	5	21
Went on after Junior, but did not complete Senior	6	
Senior	7	
Tertiary	8	

(b) Have you completed any other qualification since finishing secondary school?

Yes	1	
No	2	22

7. Do you have relations living in your present town or district?

Yes	1	
No	2	23

8. Please complete the following table:

	NUMBER OF CHILDREN							
	0	1	2	3	4	5	5+	
How many children do you have?								24
How many have not commenced school?								25
How many attend school?								26
Pre-school								27
Primary								28
Junior secondary								29
Senior secondary								30
How many have left school?								31

4.

15. In general, how would you rate the quality of teachers in country schools with which you are familiar?

		Primary	Secondary	
Excellent	1			
Good	2			
Satisfactory	3			
Poor	4			39-40
Very poor	5			
No opinion	6			

do your children attend (tick all that apply)?

Government	2	
Non-government day	3	32
Non-government boarding	4	

10. Is the main income earner in your family in government employment (local, State or Commonwealth)?

Yes	1	
No	2	33

11. What is the occupation of the main income earner in your family (e.g. motor mechanic, council truck driver, bank clerk, grazier, farm worker)? Please write occupation:

_____ 34-35

12. What is the population of the town or district in which you are living?

0-199	1	
200-499	2	
500-999	3	
1000-2499	4	36
2500-5000	5	
Over 5000	6	
(0-199	1	
200-499	2	
500-999	3	
1000-2499	4	
2500-4999	5	
5000-9999	6	
10,000-19,999	7	
20,000-100,000	8	
Over 100,000	9)	

YOUR OPINIONS

13. How satisfied are you with this town and district as a place to live?

Very satisfied	1	
Satisfied	2	
Dissatisfied	3	37
Very dissatisfied	4	

14. How would you rate your knowledge and understanding of schools (your local school in particular)?

Very good	1	
Good	2	
Fair	3	
Poor	4	38
Very poor	5	

5.

16. How important would you rate each of the following qualities and abilities of teachers for living and teaching in schools and towns or districts such as yours?

	1 No importance	2 Not important	3 Slightly important	4 Moderately important	5 Very important	6 Absolutely important	
Ability to foster a good relationship with children							41
Ability to communicate with children							42
Teaching ability							43
Ability to maintain discipline							44
Dedication to teaching							45
Patience							46
Understanding							47
Maturity							48
Experience							49
Ability to set a good example for children							50
Ability to interact with the community							51
Knowledge of subjects taught							52
Common sense							53
Intelligence							54
Ability to adapt to a different lifestyle							55
Readiness to join community organisations							56
Broadmindedness and tolerance							57
Ability to teach multi-grade classes							58
Willingness to work with low-ability students							59
Willingness to take on new roles within the school							60
Ability to "rough it"							61
High academic qualifications							62
Neat appearance							63
Outgoing personality							64
Interest in sporting activities							65
Others							
.....							66
.....							67
.....							68
.....							69

17. How important are the following reasons for principals and teachers moving from your town or district after only a relatively short stay?

	Not important 1	Slightly important 2	Moderately important 3	Very important 4	
Isolation from family and friends					10
Lack of facilities for leisure pursuits					11
Inability to adjust to living in the country					12
Difficulty in fitting in with social life of rural community					13
Promotion					14
Climate					15
Poor accommodation					16
High cost of living					17
Attitude of pupils					18
Lack of Departmental/Catholic Education Office support					19
Lack of school support					20
Others					Card 2
.....					06
.....					07
.....					08

18. How long do you think principals and teachers should stay in the one school?

	YEARS						
	1	2	3	4	5	5+	
Principals							09
Teachers							10

19. How important are the following reasons for principals and teachers staying at the one school for a number of years?

	Not important 1	Slightly important 2	Moderately important 3	Very important 4	
To allow for stability of school tone or atmosphere					11
To allow for stability and continuity in teaching methods					12
To get to know the children well					13
To get to know the community well					14
Others					
.....					15
.....					16

20. Do you think the community should be involved in the following ways in an effort to help teachers adapt to living and working in your local school and community?

	No opinion 1	No 2	Yes 3	
Helping through the P & C or P & F				17
Introducing teachers to community organisations and activities				18
Inviting teachers to visit socially with families				19
Developing friendships with teachers out of school hours				20
Assisting in the classroom				21
Being involved in school activities				22
Others				
.....				23
.....				24
.....				25
.....				26

21. How important do you think the following would be in encouraging principals and teachers to stay longer in rural schools?

(Deleted from coastal schedule)

	Not important 1	Slightly important 2	Moderately important 3	Very important 4	
Provision of better quality accommodation (including air conditioning)					27
Improvement in school facilities and equipment					28
Provision of financial incentives					29
Improved promotional opportunities after service in rural schools					30
Provision of information on what it is like to teach in rural and isolated areas					31
Others					
.....					32
.....					33
.....					34
.....					35

22. How valuable do you think the following experiences in pre-service teacher education courses would be in preparing teachers for service in rural and isolated areas?

(Deleted from coastal schedule)

	No value 1	Little value 2	Some value 3	Great value 4	
Practice teaching in rural and isolated areas					36
Subjects on teaching in small and isolated communities					37
Visits to rural and isolated schools and areas					38
Selected readings on rural and isolated schools and areas					39
Videotapes of rural and isolated schools and areas					40
Information on rural and isolated areas given by people with appropriate experiences					41
Activities involving student interaction with the community					42
Working with composite classes					43

23. Please rate the extent of your agreement with the following statements.

(Deleted from coastal schedule)

	No opinion 1	Strongly disagree 2	Disagree 3	Neither agree nor disagree 4	Agree 5	Strongly agree 6	
Principals and teachers move too quickly from schools in towns such as yours							44
The community should accept some responsibility for helping teachers to adapt to living and working in rural and isolated communities							45
Movement of teachers between schools introduces variety and new ideas							46
Student teachers should be informed of their responsibility to teach anywhere in the State							47
The procedures for selecting teachers for rural and isolated schools should be improved							48
Teacher education institutions should recommend selected students for rural appointments							49

24. General comments

Thank you for your assistance with this project.

On completion of the questionnaire, please return it to the Board of Teacher Education in the reply-paid envelope provided.

APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE DISTRIBUTION

(i) Western rural and isolated schools

State primary schools

Eulo
Quilpie
Thargominda
Augathella
Morven
Dalby
Glenmorgan
Tara
Westmar
Cooranga North
Jimbour
Warra
Condamine
Dulacca
Brigalow
Chinchilla
Kogan
Injune
Muckadilla
Mitchell
Wallumbilla
Yuleba
Grosmont
Peek-a-Doo
Wandoan
Dunkeld
Wycombe
Roma
Rolleston
Tresswell
Kilcummin
Moranbah
Emerald
Comet
Capella
Greenvale
Mingela
Ravenshoe
Camooweal
Healy
Sunset
Stonehenge
Bedourie
Winton
Dajarra
Julia Creek
McKinlay
Maxwelton
Cameron Downs
Torrens Creek
Hughenden
Evesham
Aramac
Barcaldine
Blackall
Isisford
Alpha
Tambo
Lorraine

Non-State primary schools

Sacred Heart School, Cunnamulla
St Mary's School, Charleville
Dalby Christian School
St Joseph's School, Chinchilla
St Mary's School, Taroom
St John's School, Roma
St Joseph's School, Clermont
St Keiran's School, Mount Isa
St Patrick's School, Winton
St Joseph's School, Cloncurry
St Joseph's School, Longreach
St Joseph's School, Barcaldine
St Francis' School, Hughenden
St Joseph's School, Tara

State preschool centres

Dalby
Wandoan
Winton
Mount Isa Central
Barcaldine
Richmond
Tara
Springsure
Roma
Moranbah East
Kingfisher Street, Longreach
Hughenden
Healy
Chinchilla
Charleville
Blackall

State secondary schools

Charleville
Roma
Miles
Moranbah
Kalkadoon
Longreach

Non-State secondary schools

Our Lady's College, Longreach
Mount Isa Catholic High School

(ii) Coastal and near coastal schools

State primary schools

Mitchelton
Caboolture East
Coolum
Scarborough
Rainworth
Ma Ma Creek
Hatton Vale
Coomera
Rathdowney
Marshall Road
Coolangatta
Birkdale
Killarney
Norwin
Darling Heights, Toowoomba
Bundaberg Central
Goodwood
Tinana
Gundiah
Elliott Heads
Builyan
Gladstone West
Parkhurst, Rockhampton
Halifax
Andergrove, Mackay
Swayneville

Non-State primary schools

St Edward the Confessor School, Daisy Hill
St Ambrose's School, Newmarket
Holy Cross School, Wooloowin
Blackall Range Independent School, Nambour
St Saviour's School, Toowoomba
Seventh Day Adventist School, Rockhampton
St Mary's School, Townsville West

State preschool centres

Grovely
Maleny
Bardon
Gatton Central
Miami
Murarrie
Marsden
Pittsworth
Gympie Central
Wondai
Allenstown
Farleigh, Mackay
Vincent, Townsville

State government secondary schools

Wavell
Rosewood
Mackay
Mount Morgan

Non-State secondary schools

Star of the Sea College, Southport
St Peter Claver College, Riverview
The Cathedral School, Townsville

APPENDIX 3: ADDITIONAL TABLES

Table A.3.1: Proportions of western teachers who have relatives living in the local district

	MALE (N=181) %	FEMALE (N=318) %
Relations living in district		
Yes	8	17
No	92	83

Chi. Sq. = 7.0 Sign. = 0.008

Table A.3.2: Staff size of western primary and secondary schools

	NUMBER OF TEACHERS AT SCHOOL			
	1 %	2-7 %	8-15 %	15+ %
Educational level				
Primary (N=202)	8	29	17	46
Secondary (N=216)	-	1	16	83

Chi. Sq. = 95.6 Sign. = 0.000

Table A.3.3: Proportion of male and female teachers teaching in western primary schools of various sizes

	NUMBER OF TEACHERS AT SCHOOL			
	1 %	2-7 %	8-15 %	15+ %
Sex of teacher				
Male (N=58)	22	40	10	28
Female (N=144)	2	24	20	54

Chi. Sq. = 33.3 Sign. = 0.000

Table A.3.4: Proportion of teachers in government and non-government western primary schools of various sizes

	NUMBER OF TEACHERS AT SCHOOL			
	1	2-7	8-15	15+
	%	%	%	%
Type of school				
Government (N=154)	10	19	18	54
Catholic (N=48)	2	60	17	21
Chi. Sq. = 33.5 Sign. = 0.000				

Table A.3.5: Number of year levels in classes taught by western primary and secondary teachers

	NUMBER OF YEAR LEVELS				
	1	2	3	4	MORE THAN 4
	%	%	%	%	%
Educational level					
Primary (N=191)	41	27	14	7	11
Secondary (N=215)	58	7	16	10	8
Chi. Sq. = 30.0 Sign. = 0.000					

Table A.3.6: Average class size taught by western primary and secondary teachers

	CLASS SIZE				
	< 15	16-20	21-25	26-30	> 30
	%	%	%	%	%
Educational level					
Primary (N=198)	18	20	27	30	6
Secondary (N=218)	30	23	28	18	1
Chi. Sq. = 23.7 Sign. = 0.000					

Table A.3.7: Schooling of community respondents' children

NUMBER OF CHILDREN	FAMILY STRUCTURE								SCHOOL ATTENDED							
	IN FAMILY		NOT YET AT SCHOOL		AT SCHOOL		LEFT SCHOOL		PRESCHOOL		PRIMARY		JUNIOR SECONDARY		SENIOR SECONDARY	
N	WESTERN (215)	COASTAL (179)	WESTERN (215)	COASTAL (179)	WESTERN (215)	COASTAL (179)	WESTERN (215)	COASTAL (179)	WESTERN (215)	COASTAL (179)	WESTERN (215)	COASTAL (179)	WESTERN (214)	COASTAL (179)	WESTERN (215)	COASTAL (179)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
0 (and NA)	4	1	77	85	21	7	74	72	92	89	26	26	54	43	79	84
1	6	5	16	9	15	20	10	13	5	9	34	32	32	37	14	12
2	36	30	6	4	38	37	8	6	1	1	28	25	12	18	7	2
3	26	30	< 1	1	16	22	5	4	1	1	9	12	1	< 1		1
4	15	18	< 1	1	6	13	1	2	< 1		3	5	1	1		
5	5	11			2	2	1	2								
5+	8	5			2		1	1								

Table A.4.1: Length of time western teachers had taught at present school, according to marital status, year of graduation and education level

	UP TO 1 YEAR	2-3 YEARS	4 YEARS OR LONGER
	%	%	%
Marital status			
Married (N=210)	34	37	29
Single (N=218)	47	44	9
Chi. Sq. = 34.4 Sign. = 0.000			
Year of graduation			
Pre-1980 (N=213)	31	36	33
1980 or later (N=285)	48	46	6
Chi. Sq. = 61.9 Sign. = 0.000			
Level of teaching			
Primary (N=202)	42	37	22
Secondary (N=215)	38	49	13
Chi. Sq. = 9.4 Sign. = 0.01			

Table A.4.2: Order of preference given to present school by western teachers, according to sex, time in the district and position

	1ST	2ND	3RD	GREATER THAN 3RD	NOT LISTED	NO TRANSFER SOUGHT
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Sex						
Male (N=176)	21	4	3	32	25	15
Female (N=314)	36	8	3	13	22	19
Chi. Sq. = 34.4 Sign. = 0.000						
Time in district						
Up to 6 years (N=434)	27	7	3	22	25	17
More than 6 years (N=56)	59	5	2	2	9	23
Chi. Sq. = 34.5 Sign. = 0.000						
Position						
Administrative (N=93)	18	2	3	44	17	15
Non-administrative (N=396)	33	7	3	14	24	18
Chi. Sq. = 44.5 Sign. = 0.000						

Table A.4.3: Reaction of western teacher respondents on hearing of appointment to present school, according to marital status, time in district, position, education sector, and level of teaching

	VERY SATISFIED	SATISFIED	DIS-SATISFIED	VERY DIS-SATISFIED	NO REACTION
	%	%	%	%	%
Marital status					
Married (N=208)	45	35	6	6	7
Single (N=267)	25	33	14	14	13
Chi. Sq. = 34.02 Sign. = 0.000					
Time in district					
Up to 6 years (N=440)	32	35	12	12	10
More than 6 years (N=57)	58	27	4	2	9
Chi. Sq. = 18.1 Sign. = 0.0012					
Position					
Administrative (N=92)	40	48	6	4	2
Non-administrative (N=404)	33	31	12	12	12
Chi. Sq. = 20.5 Sign. = 0.0004					
Education sector					
Government (N=424)	30	34	12	12	11
Catholic (N=70)	56	34	6	1	3
Chi. Sq. = 23.3 Sign. = 0.0001					
Level of teaching					
Primary (N=201)	42	32	8	9	7
Secondary (N=214)	27	36	12	12	13
Chi. Sq. = 13.4 Sign. = 0.0095					

Table A.4.4: Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teacher respondents that relationships among staff members are happy and friendly, according to position, sector and size of staff

	STRONGLY DISAGREE %	DISAGREE %	NEITHER %	AGREE %	STRONGLY AGREE %
Position					
Administrative (N=85)	-	1	6	62	31
Non-administrative (N=405)	3	11	15	49	22
Chi. Sq. = 18.7 Sign. = 0.0009					
Sector					
Government (N=417)	3	10	15	51	21
Catholic (N=71)	-	6	6	52	37
Chi. Sq. = 13.1 Sign. = 0.01					
Teachers at primary school					
2-7 (N=57)	2	4	4	54	37
8-15 (N=33)	12	12	24	49	3
15+ (N=93)	-	8	16	52	25
Chi. Sq. = 31.03 Sign. = 0.01					

Table A.4.5: Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teacher respondents that staff members are responsible, cooperative and have initiative according to sector and size of school

	STRONGLY DISAGREE %	DISAGREE %	NEITHER %	AGREE %	STRONGLY AGREE %
Sector					
Government (N=413)	2	6	16	57	19
Catholic (N=72)	-	1	11	47	40
Chi. Sq. = 17.5 Sign. = 0.0015					
Teachers at primary school					
2-7 (N=56)	-	-	7	57	36
8-15 (N=34)	3	15	18	44	21
15+ (N=91)	-	4	21	55	20
Chi. Sq. = 18.8 Sign. = 0.02					

Table A.4.6: Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teacher respondents that discipline is a problem in their school, according to time in district, position, and number of teachers at the school (primary only)

	STRONGLY DISAGREE %	DISAGREE %	NEITHER %	AGREE %	STRONGLY AGREE %
Time in district					
Up to 6 years (N=435)	11	34	15	29	12
More than 6 years (N=58)	7	40	33	14	7
Chi. Sq. = 15.9 Sign. = 0.0032					
Position					
Administrative (N=93)	20	44	10	19	7
Non-administrative (N=399)	8	33	19	28	12
Chi. Sq. = 22.9 Sign. = 0.0001					
Teachers at primary school					
1 (N=15)	27	67	7	-	-
2-7 (N=57)	19	46	14	18	4
8-15 (N=34)	15	41	15	27	3
15+ (N=93)	7	29	19	33	12
Chi. Sq. = 28.2 Sign. = 0.0052					

Table A.4.7(a): Extent of agreement or disagreement by western teacher respondents that children in their school seem to lack motivation, according to respondent's level of teaching

	STRONGLY DISAGREE %	DISAGREE %	NEITHER %	AGREE %	STRONGLY AGREE %
Level of teaching					
Primary (N=195)	10	27	18	29	16
Secondary (N=218)	2	2	13	32	51
Chi. Sq. = 94.3 Sign. = 0.0000					

Table A.4.7(b): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that there seems to be a high proportion of low achievers among their students, according to teacher's level of teaching

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
	%	%	%	%	%
Level of teaching					
Primary (N=198)	5	26	15	36	18
Secondary (N=219)	1	9	12	45	33

Chi. Sq. = 37.3 Sign. = 0.0000

Table A.4.7(c): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that many children in their classes come from difficult home backgrounds, according to teacher's level of teaching

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
	%	%	%	%	%
Level of teaching					
Primary (N=197)	7	21	18	37	17
Secondary (N=212)	1	11	16	56	16

Chi. Sq. = 21.7 Sign. = 0.0002

Table A.4.8(a): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that their lack of knowledge of the local situation and area makes program planning difficult, according to teacher's time in the district

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
	%	%	%	%	%
Time in district					
Up to 6 years (N=431)	3	34	26	34	4
More than 6 years (N=49)	8	61	22	8	-

Chi. Sq. = 24.4 Sign. = 0.0001

Table A.4.8(b): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that CCP/program planning is a problem, according to teacher's level of teaching

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
	%	%	%	%	%
Level of teaching					
Primary (N=199)	5	45	20	26	5
Secondary (N=190)	2	32	34	27	6
Chi. Sq. = 15 Sign. = 0.0046					

Table A.4.8(c): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that lack of access to subject master or experienced staff makes program planning difficult, according to teacher's sex and level of teaching

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
	%	%	%	%	%
Sex					
Male (N=150)	4	23	27	25	21
Female (N=279)	4	32	24	31	9
Chi. Sq. = 15.6 Sign. = 0.0036					
Level of teaching					
Primary (N=170)	6	35	35	19	5
Secondary (N=188)	4	19	20	36	22
Chi. Sq. = 44.8 Sign. = 0.0000					

Table A.4.15(a): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that, in general, the relationship between school and community is good, according to time at the school, sector, and number of teachers at the school (primary)

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
	%	%	%	%	%
Time at school					
Up to 1 year (N=200)	6	12	22	52	9
2-3 years (N=204)	3	13	14	61	8
More than 4 years (N=87)	1	5	8	83	3
Chi. Sq. = 27.6 Sign. = 0.005					
Sector					
Government (N=420)	5	12	18	60	6
Catholic (N=72)	1	6	8	68	17
Chi. Sq. = 16.9 Sign. = 0.0020					
Teachers at primary school					
1 (N=15)	-	7	20	40	33
2-7 (N=57)	4	5	7	70	14
8-15 (N=34)	6	9	24	59	3
15+ (N=93)	2	9	17	69	3
Chi. Sq. = 25.9 Sign. = 0.01					

Table A.4.15(b): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that parents' interest in the children's education is low, according to teacher's level of teaching

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
	%	%	%	%	%
Level of teaching					
Primary (N=196)	7	34	21	25	14
Secondary (N=214)	1	10	21	48	20
Chi. Sq. = 50 Sign. = 0.000					

Table A.4.9(a): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that there is a lack of resources for teaching, according to teacher's time in the district, time at the school, position and level of teaching

	STRONGLY DISAGREE %	DISAGREE %	NEITHER %	AGREE %	STRONGLY AGREE %
Time in district					
Up to 6 years (N=438)	6	30	11	32	21
More than 6 years (N=57)	7	39	23	25	7
Chi. Sq. = 12.5 Sign. = 0.0139					
Time at school					
Up to 1 year (N=202)	9	20	25	38	8
2-3 years (N=208)	4	13	18	49	17
More than 4 years (N=88)	-	11	14	58	17
Chi. Sq. = 33.4 Sign. = 0.0001					
Position					
Administrative (N=95)	5	41	15	32	7
Non-administrative (N=401)	3	25	14	35	22
Chi. Sq. = 17.5 Sign. = 0.015					
Level of teaching					
Primary (N=199)	10	36	13	31	11
Secondary (N=216)	4	23	12	33	28
Chi. Sq. = 26.1 Sign. = 0.0000					

Table A.4.9(b): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that teaching resource materials are difficult to obtain, according to teacher's position and level of teaching and number of teachers at the school

	STRONGLY DISAGREE %	DISAGREE %	NEITHER %	AGREE %	STRONGLY AGREE %
Position					
Administrative (N=95)	5	41	15	32	7
Non-administrative (N=401)	3	25	14	35	22
Chi. Sq. = 17.5 Sign. = 0.0015					
Level of teaching					
Primary (N=197)	5	30	17	35	14
Secondary (N=218)	3	23	11	36	28
Chi. Sq. = 15.1 Sign. = 0.0045					
Teachers at primary school					
1 (N=16)	6	25	6	44	19
2-7 (N=54)	11	41	7	32	9
8-15 (N=35)	-	20	11	43	26
15+ (N=92)	2	28	27	32	11
Chi. Sq. = 28.3 Sign. = 0.0051					

Table A.4.10: Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that small classes enable better teaching, according to number of teachers at teacher's primary school

	STRONGLY DISAGREE %	DISAGREE %	NEITHER %	AGREE %	STRONGLY AGREE %
Teachers at primary school					
1 (N=16)	-	31	19	6	44
2-7 (N=54)	2	4	13	33	48
8-15 (N=33)	3	-	15	27	55
15+ (N=86)	-	4	11	35	51
Chi. Sq. = 30.7 Sign. = 0.0022					

Table A.4.11: Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that their job is challenging and demanding, according to teacher's position and to number of teachers at the school (primary)

	STRONGLY DISAGREE %	DISAGREE %	NEITHER %	AGREE %	STRONGLY AGREE %
Position					
Administrative (N=95)	1	-	3	43	53
Non-administrative (N=407)	1	3	9	51	36
Chi. Sq. = 12.6 Sign. = 0.0135					
Teachers at primary school					
1 (N=16)	6	-	19	19	56
2-7 (N=57)	-	-	5	56	39
8-15 (N=35)	3	6	6	63	23
15+ (N=93)	-	-	11	56	33
Chi. Sq. = 28 Sign. = 0.0054					

Table A.4.12(a): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that having no-one else nearby teaching the same subject or year level is a problem, according to teacher's level of teaching

	STRONGLY DISAGREE %	DISAGREE %	NEITHER %	AGREE %	STRONGLY AGREE %
Level of teaching					
Primary (N=156)	4	22	24	31	19
Secondary (N=172)	2	11	17	36	34
Chi. Sq. = 17.5 Sign. = 0.0016					

Table A.4.16(a): Length of time western teachers plan to remain at their present school, according to teacher's sex, marital status, time in the district, time at present school and sector

	LEAVE IMMEDIATELY %	END OF YEAR %	NEXT YEAR %	2 YEARS %	3 YEARS %	MORE THAN 3 YEARS %
Sex						
Male (N=182)	7	35	29	15	7	6
Female (N=317)	2	30	29	16	6	16
Chi. Sq. = 17.7 Sign. = 0.003						
Marital status						
Married (N=210)	4	29	21	15	9	23
Single (N=278)	4	34	37	16	5	4
Chi. Sq. = 50.2 Sign. = 0.0000						
Time in district						
Up to 6 years (N=443)	5	34	32	16	7	6
More than 6 years (N=56)	-	16	13	9	4	58
Chi. Sq. = 126.9 Sign. = 0.0000						
Time at present school						
Up to 1 year (N=201)	6	25	30	25	8	7
2-3 years (N=207)	3	42	32	8	7	8
4 years or more (N=86)	2	28	23	11	4	33
Chi. Sq. = 72.5 Sign. = 0.0000						
Sector						
Government (N=424)	4	34	30	16	7	9
Catholic (N=72)	3	22	28	14	7	27
Chi. Sq. = 17.7 Sign. = 0.003						

Table A.4.12(b): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that there are very few experienced teachers from whom to seek advice, according to teacher's sex, time at the school, sector and level of teaching

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
	%	%	%	%	%
Sex					
Male (N=175)	5	20	11	34	30
Female (N=293)	7	32	17	29	15
Chi. Sq. = 21.2 Sign. = 0.0003					
Time at school					
Up to 1 year (N=190)	11	30	13	25	21
2-3 years (N=198)	3	26	14	33	24
4+ years (N=77)	4	27	20	39	10
Chi. Sq. = 22.1 Sign. = 0.0048					
Sector					
Government (N=402)	5	26	15	32	22
Catholic (N=64)	13	42	13	22	11
Chi. Sq. = 16.2 Sign. = 0.0027					
Level of teaching					
Primary (N=188)	7	37	18	27	11
Secondary (N=204)	5	20	13	31	31
Chi. Sq. = 32.3 Sign. = 0.0000					

Table A.4.12(c): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that teaching subjects they were not trained for is a problem, according to teacher's level of teaching

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
	%	%	%	%	%
Level of teaching					
Primary (N=129)	4	23	36	30	8
Secondary (N=178)	2	11	16	39	31
Chi. Sq. = 39.9 Sign. = 0.000					

Table A.4.12(d): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that school inspectors do not visit frequently enough, according to teacher's sex, position, and number of teachers at school (secondary)

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
	%	%	%	%	%
Sex					
Male (N=172)	8	22	34	30	8
Female (N=298)	8	33	38	17	4
Chi. Sq. = 15.9 Sign. = 0.0032					
Position					
Administrative (N=88)	5	24	30	35	7
Non-administrative (N=381)	9	29	38	19	5
Chi. Sq. = 13.2 Sign. = 0.0104					
Teachers at secondary school					
Up to 15 (N=35)	-	17	34	40	9
More than 15 (N=166)	10	34	37	16	4
Chi. Sq. = 13.44 Sign. = 0.01					

Table A.4.12(e): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that there are very few professional associations in the area, according to time at the school and level of teaching

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
	%	%	%	%	%
Time at school					
Up to 1 year (N=200)	4	19	24	34	20
2-3 years (N=207)	1	15	19	44	21
More than 4 years (N=85)	-	8	24	54	14
Chi. Sq. = 19 Sign. = 0.0149					
Level of teaching					
Primary (N=197)	2	20	23	40	15
Secondary (N=216)	2	9	22	44	23
Chi. Sq. = 13.5 Sign. = 0.0092					

Table A.4.12(f): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that there is a lack of specialist advisory teachers, according to level of teaching and number of teachers at primary school

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
	%	%	%	%	%
Level of teaching					
Primary (N=194)	5	29	14	33	20
Secondary (N=216)	1	11	13	46	29
Chi. Sq. = 33.7 Sign. = 0.0000					
Teachers at primary school					
1 (N=16)	6	19	13	50	13
2-7 (N=54)	7	19	13	22	39
8-15 (N=35)	3	26	14	49	9
15+ (N=89)	3	38	16	29	14
Chi. Sq. = 28 Sign. = 0.0055					

Table A.4.13(a): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that appointments in remote areas are easy to obtain, according to teachers' sex

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
	%	%	%	%	%
Sex					
Male (N=176)	1	3	13	46	38
Female (N=300)	1	5	21	49	23
Chi. Sq. = 13.7 Sign. = 0.0083					

Table A.4.13(b): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that there are many promotional opportunities in rural areas, according to teacher's time at the school and level of teaching

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
	%	%	%	%	%
Time at school					
Up to 1 year (N=191)	5	15	48	29	4
2-3 years (N=198)	1	23	36	33	7
More than 4 years (N=73)	10	18	30	34	8
Chi. Sq. = 22.2 Sign. = 0.0046					
Level of teaching					
Primary (N=184)	2	15	40	39	4
Secondary (N=206)	5	24	41	23	7
Chi. Sq. = 15.1 Sign. = 0.0045					

Table A.4.14(a): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that rural life is enjoyable, according to teacher's time at the school and position

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
	%	%	%	%	%
Time at school					
Up to 1 year (N=193)	6	8	22	43	21
2-3 years (N=200)	2	4	18	53	25
More than 4 years (N=87)	2	1	15	62	20
Chi. Sq. = 20.7 Sign. = 0.0079					
Position					
Administrative (N=93)	2	2	15	69	12
Non-administrative (N=398)	4	5	20	46	25
Chi. Sq. = 15.7 Sign. = 0.0034					

Table A.4.14(b): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that interaction in a small community is enjoyable, according to teacher's time in the district

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
	%	%	%	%	%
Time in district					
Up to 6 years (N=421)	3	7	22	49	20
More than 6 years (N=58)	-	5	7	71	17
Chi. Sq. = 12.5 Sign. = 0.0140					

Table A.4.14(c): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that the local people are friendly, according to teacher's time in the district

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
	%	%	%	%	%
Time in district					
Up to 6 years (N=437)	3	8	22	55	13
More than 6 years (N=57)	-	4	5	79	12
Chi. Sq. = 15.3 Sign. = 0.0041					

Table A.4.14(d): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that local people have a high regard for teachers, according to teacher's level of teaching and sector

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
	%	%	%	%	%
Level of teaching					
Primary (N=196)	4	24	35	32	5
Secondary (N=213)	14	27	37	19	3
Chi. Sq. = 18.5 Sign. = 0.0010					
Sector					
Government (N=415)	10	24	38	25	3
Catholic (N=72)	1	22	32	35	10
Chi. Sq. = 14 Sign. = 0.0074					

Table A.4.14(e): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that local people go out of their way to make teachers feel part of the community, according to teacher's level of teaching, and to number of teachers at the school (secondary)

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
	%	%	%	%	%
Level of teaching					
Primary (N=200)	10	25	37	25	4
Secondary (N=213)	16	35	38	8	3
Chi. Sq. = 25.9 Sign. = 0.0000					
Teachers at secondary school					
Up to 15 (N=36)	14	36	25	14	11
More than 15 (N=174)	17	35	40	7	1
Chi. Sq. = 14.1 Sign. = 0.01					

Table A.4.14(f): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that teachers are genuinely accepted as members of the community, according to teacher's level of teaching

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
	%	%	%	%	%
Level of teaching					
Primary (N=200)	5	19	17	53	7
Secondary (N=214)	12	28	22	34	5
Chi. Sq. = 20.3 Sign. = 0.004					

Table A.4.14(g): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that teachers are regarded as outsiders, according to teacher's level of teaching

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
	%	%	%	%	%
Level of teaching					
Primary (N=196)	5	34	25	28	9
Secondary (N=206)	5	17	28	35	15

Chi. Sq. = 16.4 Sign. = 0.0025

Table A.4.14(h): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that teachers find it hard to accept being in the public eye, according to number of teachers at primary school

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
	%	%	%	%	%
Teachers at primary school					
1 (N=15)	-	7	47	27	20
2-7 (N=58)	7	47	14	31	2
8-15 (N=34)	3	21	18	44	15
15+ (N=90)	6	34	19	37	4

Chi. Sq. = 27.8 Sign. = 0.0060

Table A.4.14(i): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that there is a lack of social life, according to teacher's time in the district and time at school

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
	%	%	%	%	%
Time in district					
Up to 6 years (N=436)	21	35	13	19	12
More than 6 years (N=57)	21	65	5	7	2
Chi. Sq. = 23.6 Sign. = 0.0001					
Time at school					
Up to 1 year (N=198)	21	30	16	18	15
2-3 years (N=206)	20	39	11	20	9
More than 4 years (N=85)	21	55	8	9	6
Chi. Sq. = 23.7 Sign. = 0.0026					

Table A.4.14(j): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that there is a lack of sporting, cultural and leisure activities, according to number of teachers at school (primary), time in the district, time at the school and sector

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
	%	%	%	%	%
Teachers at primary school					
1 (N=15)	-	-	-	67	33
2-7 (N=58)	22	41	5	21	10
8-15 (N=34)	32	18	3	35	12
15+ (N=92)	24	48	8	17	3
Chi. Sq. = 46.8 Sign. = 0.0000					
Time in district					
Up to 6 years (N=437)	23	33	6	25	13
More than 6 years (N=57)	26	58	7	7	2
Chi. Sq. = 22.1 Sign. = 0.002					
Time at school					
Up to 1 year (N=199)	24	31	4	24	18
2-3 years (N=205)	21	36	6	27	10
More than 4 years (N=86)	30	47	11	11	2
Chi. Sq. = 31.8 Sign. = 0.0001					
Sector					
Government (N=419)	24	33	7	24	14
Catholic (N=72)	22	51	3	21	3
Chi. Sq. = 14 Sign. = 0.0072					

Table A.4.15(c): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that teachers get to know (class) parents well, according to teacher's time in the district, time at the school, level of teaching, and number of teachers at the school

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
	%	%	%	%	%
Time in district					
Up to 6 years (N=443)	6	17	20	44	12
More than 6 years (N=59)	-	2	17	59	22
Chi. Sq. = 18.1 Sign. = 0.0012					
Time at school					
Up to 1 year (N=202)	9	20	25	38	8
2-3 years (N=208)	4	13	18	49	17
More than 4 years (N=88)	-	11	14	58	17
Chi. Sq. = 33.4 Sign. = 0.0001					
Level of teaching					
Primary (N=201)	2	10	23	50	15
Secondary (N=219)	10	20	18	43	9
Chi. Sq. = 22.8 Sign. = 0.0001					
Teachers at primary school					
1 (N=16)	-	-	6	50	44
2-7 (N=58)	2	9	19	57	14
8-15 (N=34)	6	9	12	50	24
15+ (N=93)	1	13	32	45	9
Chi. Sq. = 27.3 Sign. = 0.0071					
Teachers at secondary school					
Up to 15 (N=36)	3	8	22	42	25
More than 15 (N=180)	11	23	18	42	6
Chi. Sq. = 15.6 Sign. = 0.01					

Table A.4.15(d): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that itinerants place more value on education than do local residents, according to teachers' time at the school and level of teaching

	STRONGLY DISAGREE %	DISAGREE %	NEITHER %	AGREE %	STRONGLY AGREE %
Time at school					
Up to 1 year (N=190)	10	15	28	27	20
2-3 years (N=202)	15	23	19	23	20
More than 4 years (N=82)	12	39	20	21	9
Chi. Sq. = 27 Sign. = 0.0007					
Level of teaching					
Primary (N=187)	13	26	28	19	14
Secondary (N=211)	11	18	21	27	23
Chi. Sq. = 12.5 Sign. = 0.0140					

Table A.4.15(e): Extent of agreement or disagreement among western teachers that lack of personal privacy intrudes into their professional work, according to teacher's level of teaching

	STRONGLY DISAGREE %	DISAGREE %	NEITHER %	AGREE %	STRONGLY AGREE %
Level of teaching					
Primary (N=195)	6	30	22	24	18
Secondary (N=206)	3	19	18	31	28
Chi. Sq. = 13.6 Sign. = 0.0007					

Table A.4.16(b): Western teachers' preference for subsequent isolated school, according to position and number of teachers at school (primary)

	SAME SIZE %	SMALLER %	LARGER %	MUCH LARGER %
Position				
Administrative (N=35)	37	9	51	3
Non-administrative (N=122)	59	21	19	1
Chi. Sq. = 16.7 Sign. = 0.0008				
Teachers at primary school				
1 (N=9)	11	-	89	-
2-7 (N=22)	41	14	41	5
8-15 (N=10)	50	30	20	-
15+ (N=25)	60	36	4	-
Chi. Sq. = 27.7 Sign. = 0.0011				

Table A.4.17: Western community respondents' degree of satisfaction with their town or district as a place in which to live, according to their time in the district and to the population size of town or district

	VERY SATISFIED %	SATISFIED %	DIS-SATISFIED %	VERY DISSATISFIED %
Time in district				
Up to 6 years (N=78)	19	67	12	3
More than 6 years (N=133)	38	56	5	1
Chi. Sq. = 11.2 Sign. = 0.01				
Population				
0-999 (N=29)	17	79	3	-
1,000-5,000 (N=51)	22	63	10	6
5,000+ (N=123)	40	54	7	-
Chi. Sq. = 18.9 Sign. = 0.0044				

Table A.4.18: Western community respondents' perception of desirable length of stay in one school for principals, according to population of town or district

	NUMBER OF YEARS					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Population						
0-999 (N=28)	-	21	46	11	14	7
1,000-5,000 (N=50)	-	18	36	14	20	12
5,000+ (N=119)	1	2	25	22	33	18

Chi. Sq. = 29.9 Sign. = 0.009

Table A.4.19: Western community respondents' perception of importance of isolation from family and friends as a reason for principals and teachers leaving the district, according to respondents' length of residence in district

	NOT IMPORTANT	SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT	MOD. IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT
	%	%	%	%
Time in district				
Up to 6 years (N=73)	18	11	29	43
More than 6 years (N=130)	13	25	49	25

Chi. Sq. = 11.0 Sign. = 0.0117

Table A.4.20: Western community respondents' extent of agreement or disagreement that the procedures for selecting teachers for rural and isolated schools should be improved, according to respondents' length of residence in district

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
	%	%	%	%	%
Time in district					
Up to 6 years (N=66)	2	5	8	32	55
More than 6 years (N=131)	-	4	18	47	32

Chi. Sq. = 13.0 Sign. = 0.0112

Table A.5.1: Western community respondents' rating of ability to teach multigrade classes, according to population of community

	NOT IMPORTANT	SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT	MODERATELY IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL
	%	%	%	%	%
Population					
0-999 (N=29)	-	7	7	35	52
1,000-5,000 (N=48)	4	10	29	25	31
5,000+ (N=119)	8	16	37	29	10

Chi. Sq. = 33.7 Sign. = 0.0000

Table A.5.2: Western primary teacher respondents' rating of the importance of ability to teach multigrade classes, according to number of teachers at respondents' school

	NOT IMPORTANT	SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT	MODERATELY IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL
	%	%	%	%	%
Teachers at primary school					
1 (N=15)	-	-	27	13	60
2-7 (N=57)	2	7	7	47	37
8-15 (N=33)	3	6	18	49	24
15+ (N=87)	-	13	33	35	20

Chi. Sq. = 30.9 Sign. = 0.0021

Table A.5.3: Western primary teacher respondents' rating of the importance of willingness to work with low-ability students, according to number of teachers at respondents' school

	NOT IMPORTANT	SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT	MODERATELY IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL
	%	%	%	%	%
Teachers at primary school					
1 (N=15)	7	-	47	33	13
2-7 (N=58)	-	10	10	50	29
8-15 (N=33)	-	6	9	52	33
15+ (N=90)	-	3	24	50	22

Chi. Sq. = 30.5 Sign. = 0.0024

Table A.5.4: Western primary teacher respondents' rating of the importance of ability to maintain discipline, according to number of teachers at respondents' school

	MODERATELY IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL
	%	%	%
Teachers at primary school			
1 (N=15)	33	53	13
2-7 (N=58)	14	59	28
8-15 (N=33)	9	52	40
15+ (N=89)	1	60	39

Chi. Sq. = 22.0 Sign. = 0.0012

Table A.6.1: Western teachers' perceptions of the emphasis given in their pre-service programs to a number of areas, according to teachers' year of graduation

YEAR OF GRADUATION	NONE %	LITTLE %	MODERATE %	GREAT %
Teaching multigrades				
Pre-1980 (N=206)	58	34	6	2
1980+ (N=279)	44	41	13	2
Chi. Sq. = 13.1 Sign. = 0.0044				
Living in a rural community				
Pre-1980 (N=205)	82	14	3	1
1980+ (N=281)	66	31	3	-
Chi. Sq. = 21.5 Sign. = 0.0001				
School/community relations				
Pre-1980 (N=203)	58	27	10	4
1980+ (N=283)	24	49	23	5
Chi. Sq. = 61.8 Sign. = 0.0000				
Individualising instruction				
Pre-1980 (N=202)	15	48	28	8
1980+ (N=279)	6	38	42	14
Chi. Sq. = 23.4 Sign. = 0.0000				
Curriculum development				
Pre-1980 (N=206)	16	33	40	12
1980+ (N=282)	5	21	47	28
Chi. Sq. = 37.5 Sign. = 0.0000				
Teaching exceptional children within mainstream				
Pre-1980 (N=207)	48	37	13	2
1980+ (N=283)	20	50	25	5
Chi. Sq. = 45.9 Sign. = 0.0000				
CCP/work program planning				
Pre-1980 (N=199)	25	35	28	13
1980+ (N=278)	8	23	43	26
Chi. Sq. = 44.8 Sign. = 0.0000				

Table A.6.1 (contd)

YEAR OF GRADUATION	NONE %	LITTLE %	MODERATE %	GREAT %
Utilising the local environment				
Pre-1980 (N=205)	31	46	20	3
1980+ (N=282)	15	49	29	7
Chi. Sq. = 21.6 Sign. = 0.0001				
Multicultural education				
Pre-1980 (N=207)	62	24	13	1
1980+ (N=281)	25	37	29	10
Chi. Sq. = 74.6 Sign. = 0.0000				
Issues related to Aboriginal education				
Pre-1980 (N=206)	65	25	9	1
1980+ (N=279)	35	39	22	4
Chi. Sq. = 45.2 Sign. = 0.0000				

Table A.7.1: Importance to western teachers of regular contact with subject specialist, according to level of teaching

	NOT IMPORTANT %	SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT %	MODERATELY IMPORTANT %	VERY IMPORTANT %
Level of teaching				
Primary (N=194)	4	14	42	39
Secondary (N=218)	3	8	31	58
Chi. Sq. = 15.4 Sign. = 0.0015				

Table A.7.2: Importance to western teachers of access to teaching resources, according to recency of pre-service teacher education

	NOT IMPORTANT %	SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT %	MODERATELY IMPORTANT %	VERY IMPORTANT %
Year of graduation				
Pre-1980 (N=213)	< 1	11	42	47
1980+ (N=283)	1	3	23	73
Chi. Sq. = 36.7 Sign. = 0.000				

Table A.7.3: Level of personal adjustment difficulties among married and single western teachers

	NO DIFFICULTY %	SOME DIFFICULTY %	CONSIDERABLE DIFFICULTY %
Marital status			
Married (N=212)	57	32	12
Single (N=263)	40	41	19
Other (N=21)	38	43	19
Chi. Sq. = 15.0 Sign. = 0.004			

Table A.7.4: Level of difficulty in adjusting experienced by western teachers according to length of time in district

LENGTH OF TIME IN DISTRICT	NO DIFFICULTY %	SOME DIFFICULTY %	CONSIDERABLE DIFFICULTY %
Personal adjustment			
Up to 6 years (N=439)	43	40	17
Greater than 6 years (N=58)	78	15	7
Chi. Sq. = 25.2 Sign. = 0.0000			
Social adjustment			
Up to 6 years (N=438)	47	40	12
Greater than 6 years (N=58)	76	21	3
Chi. Sq. = 17.1 Sign. = 0.0002			
Professional adjustment			
Up to 6 years (N=438)	43	46	11
Greater than 6 years (N=59)	64	29	7
Chi. Sq. = 9.5 Sign. = 0.009			

Table A.7.5: Value of various support/advisory structures to western teachers, according to teacher's sex

SEX	NO VALUE %	LITTLE VALUE %	SOME VALUE %	GREAT VALUE %
Family and friends				
Male (N=132)	23	21	36	19
Female (N=243)	8	16	39	37
Chi. Sq. = 26.0 Sign. = 0.000				
School induction package				
Male (N=139)	21	24	42	14
Female (N=187)	9	23	42	26
Chi. Sq. = 14.7 Sign. = 0.002				
Beginning teacher seminars				
Male (N=97)	29	20	33	17
Female (N=160)	12	26	41	20
Chi. Sq. = 10.7 Sign. = 0.013				

Table A.7.6: Value of P. & C. or P. & F. as a support and advisory body to western teachers and administrators

	NO VALUE %	LITTLE VALUE %	SOME VALUE %	GREAT VALUE %
Position				
Administrative (N=79)	11	30	49	9
Non-administrative (N=290)	25	32	33	10
Chi. Sq. = 10.1 Sign. = 0.01				

Table A.7.7: Value of Regional Office and Catholic Education Office seminars to western teachers, according to year of graduation, employer, and level of teaching

	NO VALUE %	LITTLE VALUE %	SOME VALUE %	GREAT VALUE %
Year of graduation				
Pre-1980 (N=59)	7	3	71	19
1980+ (N=53)	24	9	43	23
Chi. Sq. = 11.3 Sign. = 0.009				
Employer				
Government (N=65)	23	9	55	12
Catholic (N=47)	4	2	62	32
Chi. Sq. = 13.8 Sign. = 0.003				
Level of teaching				
Primary (N=64)	11	2	62	25
Secondary (N=31)	26	16	42	16
Chi. Sq. = 12.2 Sign. = 0.006				

Table A.7.8: Western community opinion on community involvement/assistance in the classroom, according to sex of respondent and size of township

	NO %	YES %
Sex		
Male (N=48)	42	58
Female (N=149)	13	87
Chi. Sq. = 17.3 Sign. = 0.000		
Population		
0-999 (N=28)	-	100
1,000-5,000 (N=46)	24	76
5,000+ (N=117)	25	75
Chi. Sq. = 8.7 Sign. = 0.012		

APPENDIX 4: MEMBERSHIP OF RESEARCH COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD OF TEACHER EDUCATION

(1985-87)

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(from April 1986)

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